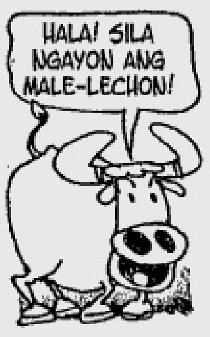
Fernando gives up DPWH post, keeps MMDA chair

'Story in Metro, Page A24

'Lechon' also bad for execs' careers


HALA! SILA NGAYON ANG MALE-LECHON!

By Rolly San Juan
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Roast pig is not only bad for your health. If you're a government official, it's also bad for your career.

Two top officials of

'LECHON'/ A21

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

WHAT'S INSIDE

- Double whammy for Quirimit SPORTS /A28
- Mindoro probe widened NEWS /A2

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Singapore quarantine ways studied

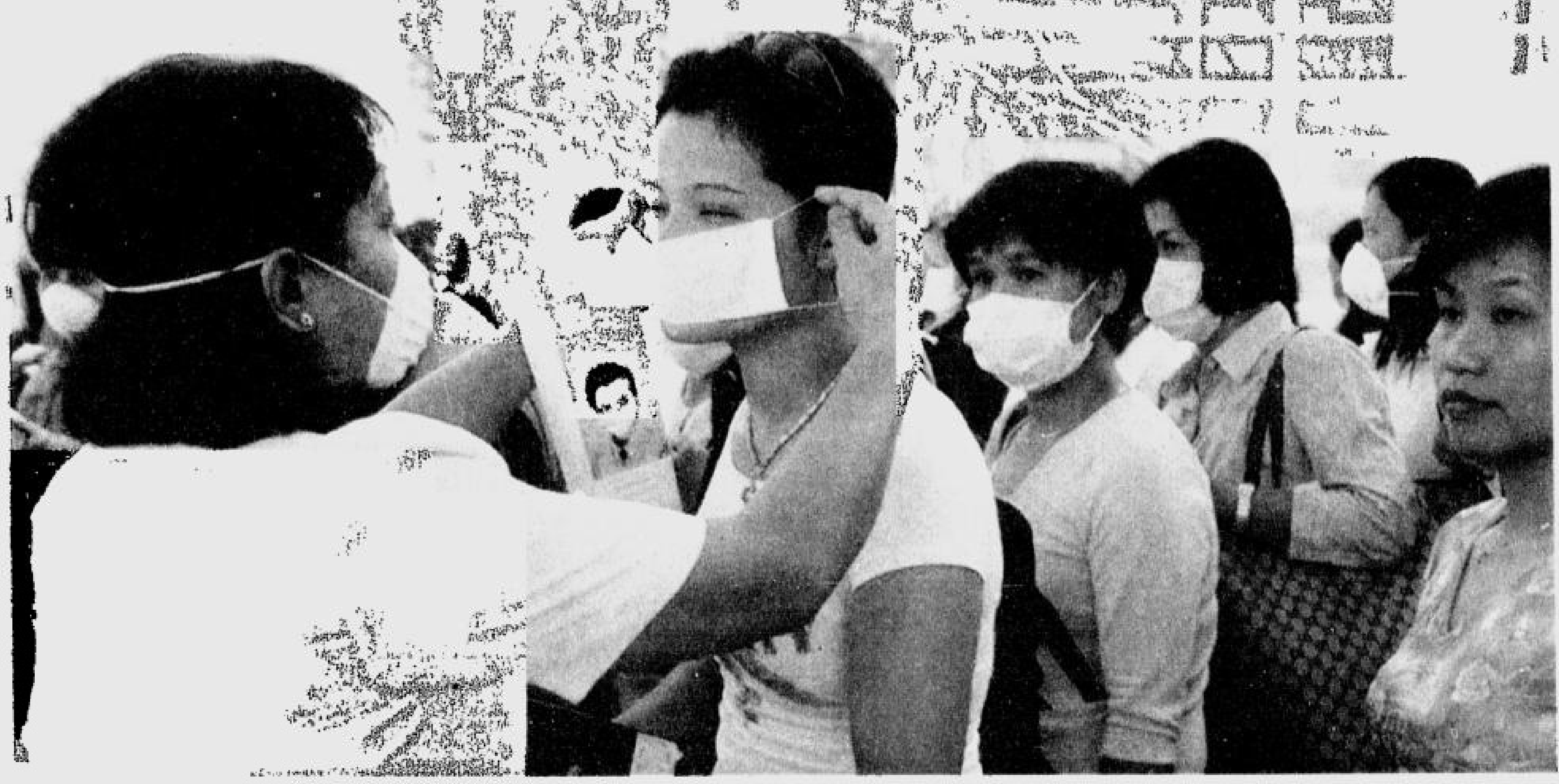
By Vincent Cabreza, Blanche S. Rivera and Joey A. Gabieta

THE GOVERNMENT'S disaster management team is studying the quarantine protocols of Singapore after it encountered quarantine violations in Alcala, Pangasinan, hometown of Adela Catalon, the country's first confirmed fatality of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

Defense Undersecretary Melchor Rosales, executive director of the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), on Saturday said in Baguio City that Singapore's measures against SARS could give the country a shield against the dreaded disease.

Singapore authorities have isolated neighborhoods, whose residents exhibit SARS-like symptoms, and applied penal and probation techniques in monitoring

SINGAPORE/ A21



A PHILIPPINE Airlines supervisor adjusts the mask of a Filipino worker bound for Hong Kong. Travelers are required by PAL to wear surgical masks as protection from SARS. ROGER MARGALLO

'Nat'l emergency' on SARS

Issue is not about human rights but survival–GMA

By Carlito Pablo

"THIS is a national emergency."

So did Malacañang describe yesterday the situation following the Department of Health's admission that the country was no longer free of the deadly Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome virus.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said officials could invoke their police power to detain quarantine violators and punish profiteers.

"This police power could be used to protect public welfare, and public welfare includes health care. So, there could be temporary detentions if needed," he said.

Bunye used the term "national emergency" in two radio interviews as he warned traders, who are illegally profiting from the sale of masks, vitamins and other items deemed essential to the fight against SARS, that they face sanctions.

He noted that masks, particularly the N95 type, were reportedly being sold at "triple the normal price."

"This is a national emergency and this situation shouldn't be used for profit," Bunye said over radio station dzMM.

Bunye made the same warning over radio station RMN, saying: "If needed, stricter sanctions should be applied against businessmen who take advantage of the national emergency."

In Nueva Vizcaya, President Macapagal-Arroyo said the possible implementation of a "very strong discipline" to contain SARS "is not an issue of human rights but of human survival."

"It is an issue of making sure that the whole community as much as possible will be safe from this scourge which is afflicting the world," she said Saturday.

The President had given Health Secre-

NATIONAL/ A20

A DEVOTEE kisses the foot of the image of Jesus Christ at a church in Malate, Manila. Underscoring the widespread concern over SARS, Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin has discouraged people from kissing religious icons. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Beijing closes bars, theaters as global death toll hits 317

BEIJING—Authorities on Sunday closed theaters, Internet cafés and other entertainment venues in the Chinese capital to halt the spread of SARS as the health ministry reported nine new deaths from the flu-like illness nationwide.

In Hong Kong, officials reported that 12 more patients had died from Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), matching the territory's previous one-day record. But officials reported just 16 new infections, the lowest total yet since the government began releasing daily statistics last month.

Taiwan also reported its first SARS death from a total of 55 infections and immediately imposed a 10-day quarantine on all travelers from SARS-hit countries. *(See story on Page A18.)*

In a rare emergency summit in Bangkok this week, Asean's 10 leaders, plus China's Premier Wen Jiabao, are expected to present a unified front to the world in their battle against the SARS crisis. Its potentially devastating social impact is becoming clear, with at least 317 people now dead from the illness, mostly in Asia, and more than 4,800 people infected in more than 30 countries.

The Beijing government ordered the closure of places of entertainment "to stop the possible spread of the SARS virus and ensure public health," the offi-

BEIJING/ A18

Survey shows GMA not winning battle of perception

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

IN THE FOUR months since President Macapagal-Arroyo announced her "self-sacrifice"—her decision not to seek election next year—the country has run into two crises of global proportions: the war in Iraq, followed by the SARS epidemic.

Although the US-led coalition's military campaign vanquished Iraq in only 26 days, it created economic uncertainties that sent the markets reeling and set back economic growth worldwide.

The World Bank last week shaved one percentage point off its growth forecast for East Asia, down to 5 percent, as a consequence of the economic havoc being wrought by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome crisis.

The uncertainties flowing from these two events are expected to curtail our own growth rate for the rest of the year and even beyond.

According to the Social Weather Stations survey firm, the Iraq conflict has something to do with the steep drop of the administration's popularity rating in March, owing to its close identification with US President George W. Bush's war policy on Iraq.

Thus, even though Ms Macapagal cast her lot with the winner in the Iraq war, the question of whether the US victory in

SURVEY/ A18

Divers caught spearfishing in Apo Reef

THIS photo of divers with a speargun and a dead grouper was taken at the Apo Reef on April 19. TONI EFUNE

By Alya B. Honasan
SIM Editor in Chief

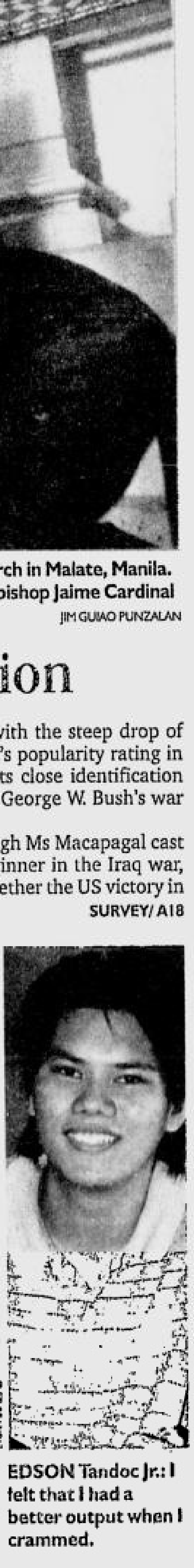
THE PHILIPPINE diving community is in an uproar as recreational divers make a move to police their ranks.

A group of 12 divers has filed a formal complaint with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources against three divers who were spearfishing in the Apo Reef Marine Natural Park in Occidental Mindoro and a diver who was recording the brazen activity on video. The spearfishing group came from the boat Tiara II.

The complainants witnessed the illegal activity while on board the Oceanic Explorer boat on a scuba diving trip to the marine park on April 16-20.

The complaint, which was received by park rangers at the Apo Reef on

DIVERS/ A19



ERIK ARAZAS

EDSON Tandoc Jr.: I felt that I had a better output when I crammed.

PDI scholar UP summa cum laude

By Philip Tubeza

EDSON C. Tandoc Jr. crammed for many of his school papers, was intimidated by his English-speaking classmates, and rarely stayed in the library, borrowing only about 20 books in all his four years in college.

But on Saturday afternoon, Tandoc, a University of the Philippines journalism student and INQUIRER scholar, graduated summa cum laude, the first ever from the UP College of Mass Communication since it was founded in 1965.

"I can't believe it," he said last week, in an easy mix of English and Filipino. "Up to now, I don't feel like a summa cum

PDI SCHOLAR/ A20

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/04/28/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONTPAGE

Probe into activists' deaths widened

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE FACT-FINDING team investigating the deaths of two human rights activists in Oriental Mindoro has widened the scope of its investigation to include cases involving more alleged military atrocities in the province.

National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco told the INQUIRER yesterday that the probe of other military abuses was in order considering the claims made by the Karapatan human rights group in Southern Tagalog.

"Our investigation will include other criminal acts perpetrated in connection with or somehow related to the two murders," Wycoco said.

He said the "other incidents" would be probed to erase any suspicions of a whitewash in the investigation of the deaths of Eden Marcellana and Eddie Gumanoy.

Bayan Secretary General Teodoro Casiño had demanded on Saturday that the NBI and the Department of Justice open a "full dress" inquiry into more than 30 cases involving the military against activists and civilians in Mindoro Oriental.

Casiño and other militants said the initial findings of the DOJ fact-finding team that the military was behind the killing of Marcellana and Gumanoy confirmed that Mindoro Oriental was being "ruled with terror."

Imelda Lacandazo, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas vice chair, said the civil rights abuses in Southern Tagalog escalated after Col. Jovito Palparan was named commander of the 204th Infantry Brigade.

Wycoco has ordered head agent Sixto Comia of the NBI Criminal and Investigation Division to send more agents to the province.

"The additional team of agents will serve as a backup. We are willing to send additional personnel should the Department of Justice ask for it," he said.

"The NBI agents have been attached to the five-man fact-finding team headed by Justice Undersecretary Jose Calida," he added.

Calida had been designated by President Macapagal-Arroyo to head the joint NBI-DOJ team.

On Friday, a highly placed DOJ source said the military was behind the abduction and brutal slay of the two civil rights leader on April 21.

The source told the INQUIRER evidence had been found proving that the military—not vigilante groups—had summarily executed the two activists.

The initial report named at least five suspects in the killings. Calida did not disclose their identities.

As to the involvement of the communist New People's Army in the killings, Calida said: "We are looking at all angles, and until the investigation is closed we will not exonerate anyone."

Marcellana's widower, however, described the DOJ-NBI fact-finding team as "inutile and a mere cosmetic for an eventual whitewash."

"In our five-day stay in Manila, not a shadow of the task force had come to us and inquired about what had really happened. That task force is a joke," Orly Marcellana told reporters in Lucena City.

Marcellana said: "I'd rather wait for the kind of revolutionary justice meted out to Col. Aguinaldo. I'm willing to wait even for many decades," he said. *With Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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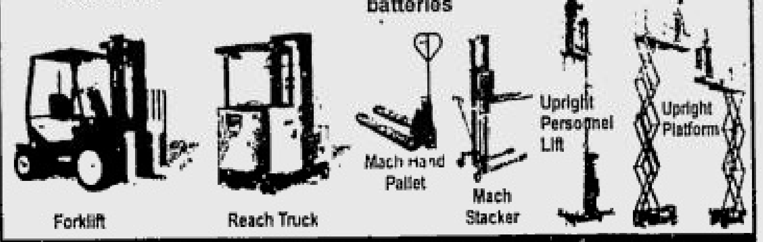

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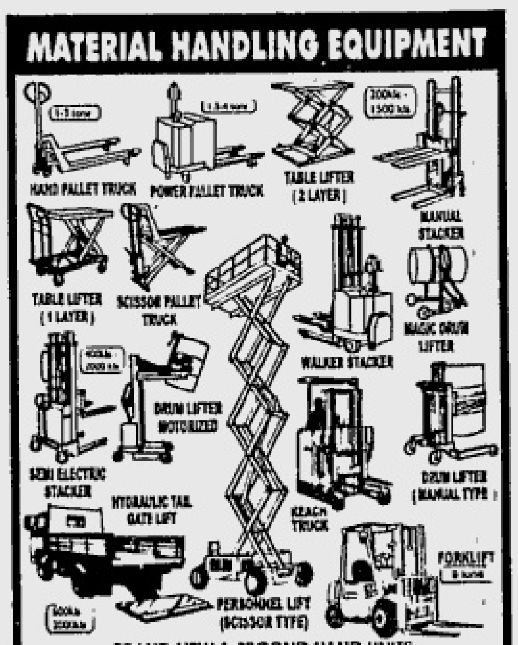

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In death, activist-daughter awes her father

LUCENA CITY—Isidro Mercado couldn't believe his daughter, Eden Marcellana, who didn't even finish second year in the village high school, had become a national figure.

After five days of meeting government officials and politicians who had come to share his grief, he was still in awe of her.

"People I had only read about and seen in news reports came to sympathize with me," the 69-year-old farmer said on Saturday upon arrival from Manila with the body of the slain human rights activist.

The L-300 van that carried Marcellana's white coffin had been accompanied by at least 12 vehicles filled with fellow activists, friends and relatives.

"Eden is a heroine and a martyr. Now I realize the greatness of her work," Mercado told the INQUIRER during the overnight wake at the patio of St. Ferdinand Cathedral here.

Started at 12

He recalled how his daughter started her advocacy at the tender age of 12, when she joined a militant youth organization in their village. She was unselfish, he said, and truly cared for the poor and the helpless, proving this by not allowing her lack of a formal education to stop her from her goals.

Marcellana was 31 at the time of her death, and was secretary general of the Karapatan human rights group in Southern Tagalog. Her tortured body and that of Eddie Gumanoy, chair of the farmers' group Katipunan ng mga Samahang Magbubukid sa Timog Katagalugan, were found in Bansud, Oriental Mindoro last Tuesday.

Mercado said he had been overwhelmed by the public outrage and the protest mobilizations in Manila. But this could not diminish his anger over the apparent fact that his daughter, second to the eldest of 14 children, had been defenseless against her killers.

"She was unarmed," the old man lamented. "She was right all along; this government has no respect for human rights."

Before starting on the final three-hour ride to Barangay Pidac in the Bondoc Peninsula—the victim's hometown, where she will be buried tomorrow—the caravan made a brief protest stop Sunday morning at the gate of the Armed Forces Southern Luzon Unified Command in Camp Nakar.

Gumanoy's remains were interred yesterday at the Sto. Tomas cemetery.

Friends and relatives offered roses and rice stalks tied with red ribbons before the burial. His fellow peasant organizers said this represented the right to own land to till, which Gumanoy had fought for. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr. and Clarice Colting, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

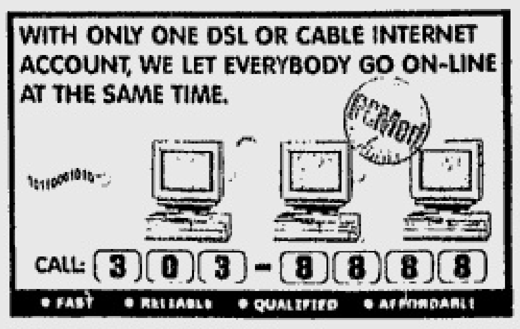
Malaysian minister arriving

MALAYSIAN Defense Minister Najib Abdul Razak will travel to the Philippines this week to talk about regional security and antiterrorism cooperation with President Macapagal-Arroyo and other Filipino officials.

Presidential adviser Norberto Gonzales said Sunday Najib will meet with Ms Macapagal and his Filipino counterpart, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes. He will also deliver a speech before an academic security forum during his three-day visit that starts Monday.

Gonzales, who is on top of government efforts to revive peace talks with the Muslim separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front, said he will talk to Najib about Malaysia's assistance in brokering the negotiations.

Malaysia had hosted talks between the Philippine government and the guerrillas that led to a shaky truce and other accords. *AP*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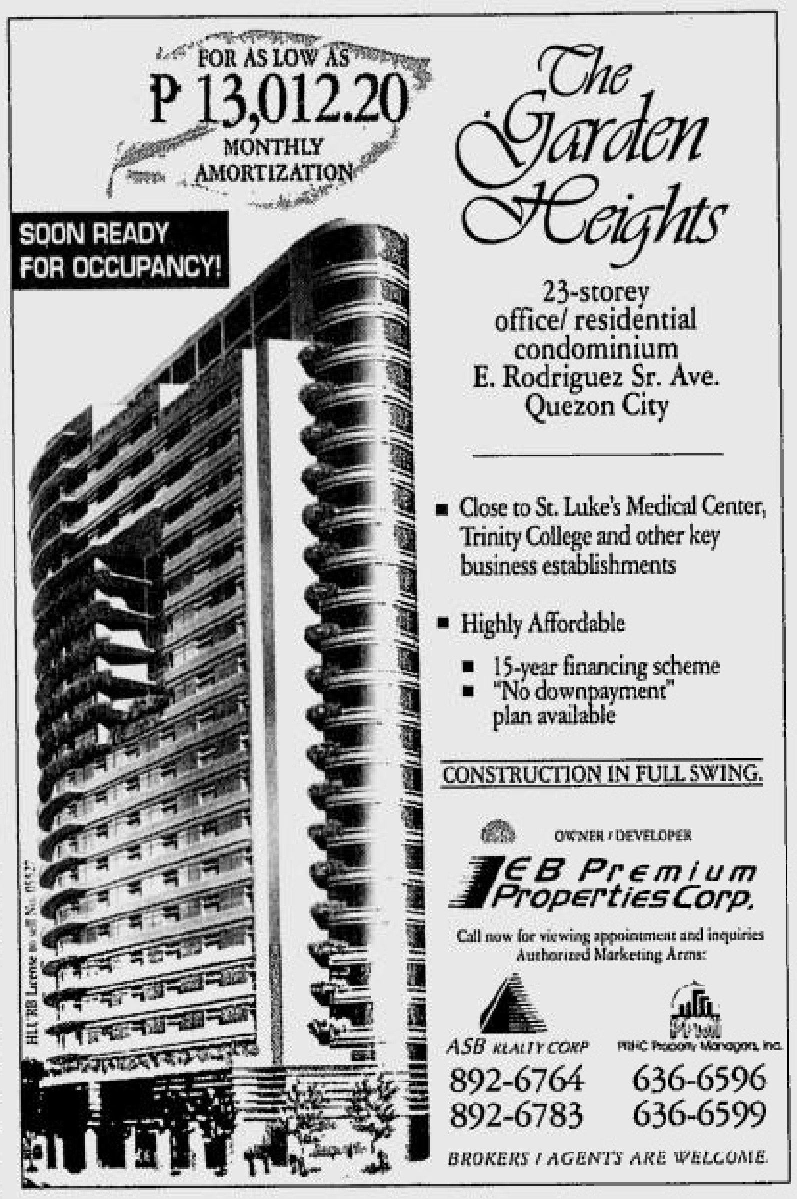
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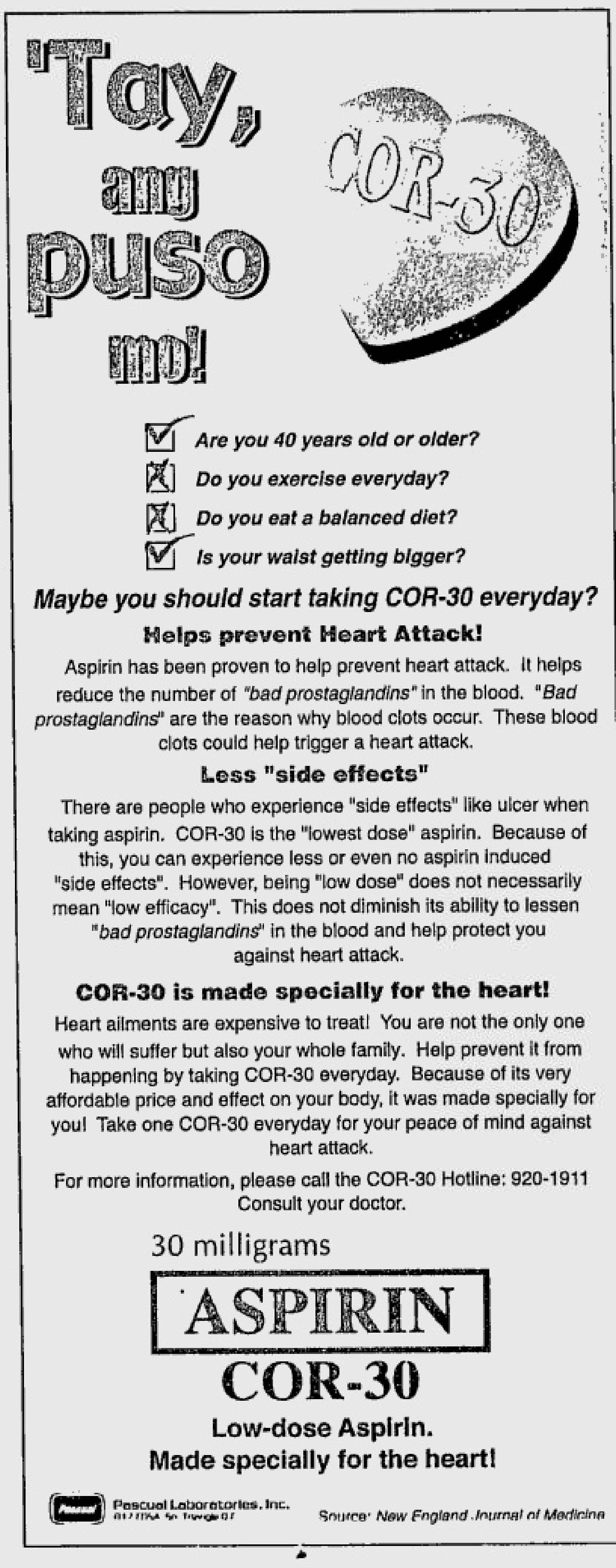
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By Gerald G. Lacuarta

FOR THEIR "shoddy" offer of free train rides, admission to basketball games and free concerts in lieu of a wage hike, President Macapagal-Arroyo and Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas are getting *patola* and *kalabasa* "awards" from workers on May 1.

Former party-list Rep. Renato Magtubo, chair of the Partido ng Manggagawa, suggested that Sto. Tomas head instead the Games and Amusements Board (GAB) after "amusing workers" with the freebies.

Labor Day is traditionally marked by announcements of salary increases and benefits.

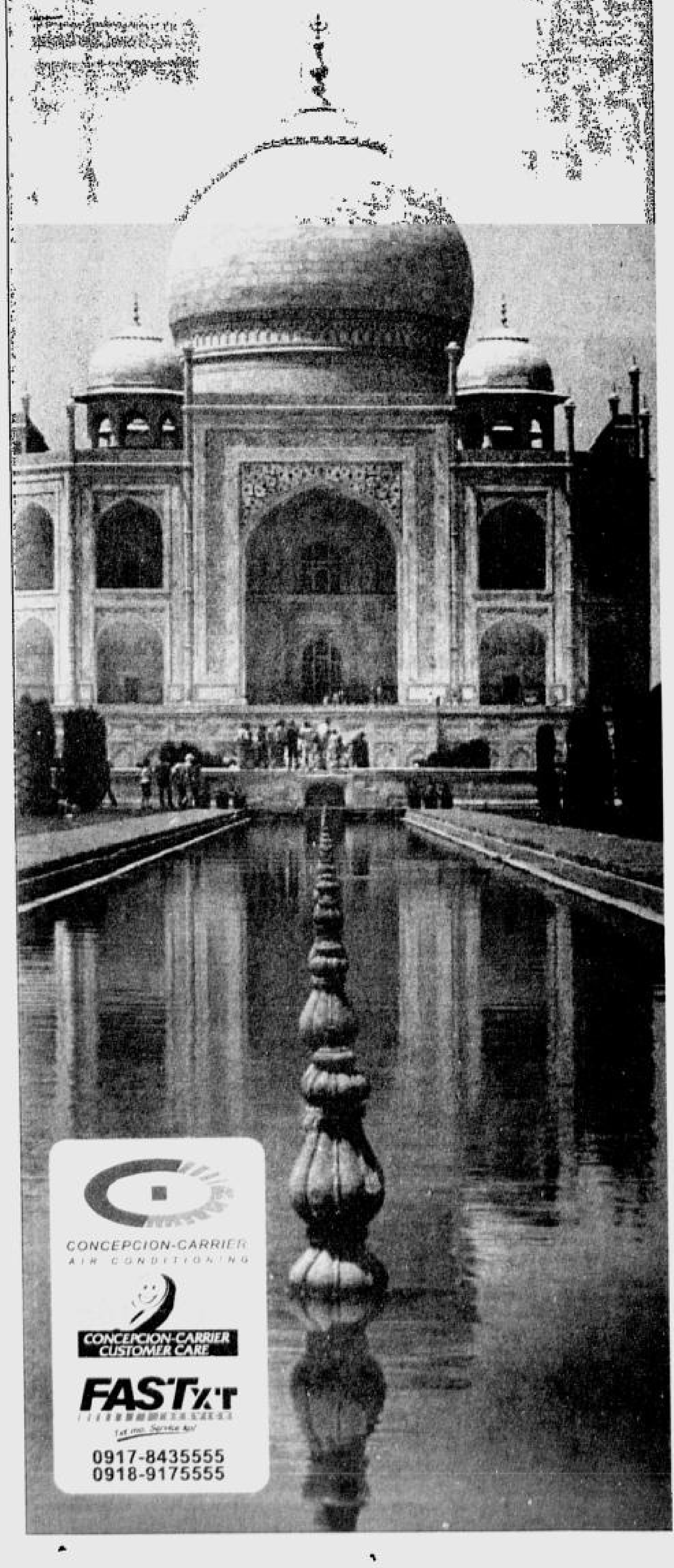
"The DOLE and Malacañang are more interested in diverting the workers' attention," Magtubo said. "We return the favor by presenting them *patola* (sponge gourd)."

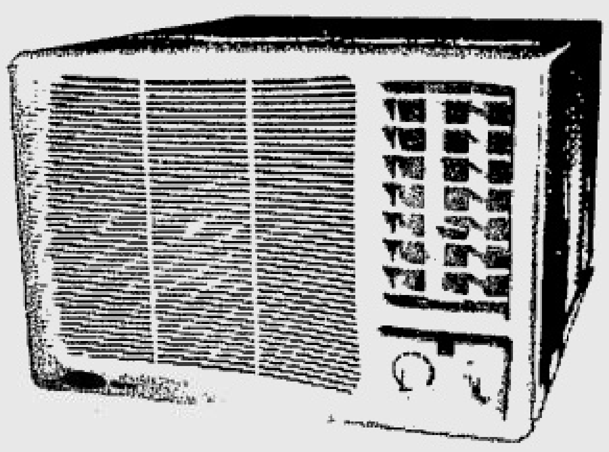
Organized labor has long been clamoring for a legislated salary increase, which the government and employers are strongly opposed to. Magtubo said that the current daily minimum wage of P280 in the National Capital Region is hardly enough for workers and their families.

Partido is demanding a "living wage" which, Magtubo said, should be around P500 a day, according to the government's own studies. The group vowed to hold the biggest Labor Day rallies ever around the country.

The protesters will also present "*kalabasa*" (squash) seeds to Ms Macapagal and Sto. Tomas by way of saying that the two should start planting these "so they would have something more valuable [for the workers] next year."

Magtubo likewise scoffed at the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (PCCI) plan to distribute respiratory masks to help protect workers against the killer pneumonia. "The best anti-SARS protection package is a complete health care program," he said. ***With Carlito Pablo and Martin P. Marfil***





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10 senators said to favor assembly mode for Cha-cha

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

AN OFFICIAL of the House of Representatives said yesterday 10 senators are in favor of amending the 1987 Constitution through a constituent assembly.

The official, who refused to be named, said the senators had expressed their support for a constituent assembly in "small group and individual meetings" with advocates of that method of amending the Charter.

The official identified the senators as Edgardo Angara, Robert Barbers, Manuel Villar, Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Vicente Sotto III, Robert Jaworski, Ramon Revilla, Teresa Aquino-Oreta, Rodolfo Biazon and John Osmeña.

A constituent assembly would be composed of the sitting senators and representatives.

"We're not saying this is a *fait accompli* but we're very close to having a constituent assembly. We now have a coalition of majority and opposition senators supporting one," said the official.

A simple majority vote in both chambers of Congress is needed to approve a resolution calling for a constituent assembly.

With 10 senators leaning toward a constituent assembly, only two more senators are needed to approve a resolution calling for one. A House majority is in favor of this mode of Constitutional change.

The official said four other senators are likely to eventually go for an assembly—Gregorio Honasan, Loren Legarda, Ramon Magsaysay Jr. and Ralph Recto.

The official said Angara, chair of the Senate committee on constitutional amendments, was confident the Senate would approve the assembly resolution.

Angara, the official said, will file a committee report recommending either an assembly or a Constitutional convention to amend the Charter depending on the final vote of the senators.

But the official said that even if the Senate goes for a convention, the deadlock holds good chances for an assembly.

He said that if the two chambers approve opposing modes, a bicameral conference committee is expected to be convened to "reconcile" the measures.

Under a parliamentary unicameral set-up which is being pushed by the House, senators will lose their posts, which is said to be the reason some senators are furiously opposed to a constituent assembly.

There has been talk of allowing senators to become automatic members of the parliament.

Focolare Movement sets Marian meet

THE FOCOLARE Movement, a movement for social and spiritual renewal, has organized the International Marian Congress in response to Pope John Paul II's call to pray the rosary for the family and for mankind to achieve world peace.

Dubbed as contemplating Christ through Mary's eyes, the Marian Congress aims to reveal the richness of the gospel through a three-day convention so that "we may become builders of peace and of a world that is closer to the plan of God."

The gathering on April 28-30 is held at the Castelgandolfo in Rome. The speakers come from the movements and ecclesiastical communities of the Jewish and Muslim religions.

It is broadcast worldwide through the Internet and satellite link-up via Telepace, EWTN and Cancao Nova in Brazil. National and local television networks will connect up to these media sources.

An interlude of artistic pieces representing different people as a way of expressing Mary, masterpiece of beauty, is one of the program's highlights.

The Focolare Movement, officially known as the "Work of Mary," was founded by Chiara Lubich 60 years ago on Dec. 7, 1943. Since then, it has spread to 182 countries with members from all ages, backgrounds, creeds walks of life

Rights group says soldiers killed pa, son

MATI, Davao Oriental—A two-year-old boy and his father were killed during an encounter between government forces and suspected New People's Army rebels in Barangay Mahan-ub, Baganga town on Friday, the human rights group Karapatan-Mindanao said.

In its own report, however, the Army's 701st Infantry Battalion said at least six suspected NPA rebels were captured by elements of the 8th Special Forces Battalion during the encounter. The military report did not mention any casualties.

But Karapatan-Mindanao in a statement said William Masinid and his son Wilmore were killed when soldiers fired at their house.

"The military did not disclose this to the media because they were the ones who killed these innocent people," Karapatan said.

The army's figure differed from the number of rebels reported captured by local police which was seven. Agence France Presse reported that one rebel was killed and five others were captured, quoting the military.

On Saturday, the wire agency said, troops raided a rebel lair near the area and arrested five NPA guerrillas, who were being interrogated.

But Karapatan said those arrested were innocent civilians.

In Davao City, Mayor Rodrigo Duterte yesterday asked business leaders to reconsider their feelings toward President Macapagal-Arroyo's declaration of a state of lawless violence in Southern Mindanao, following two bombings that killed at least 48 people and wounded at least 200 others.

Local business leaders had raised concerns over the President's declaration, saying it was hurting local industries. *Ferdinand O. Zuasola and Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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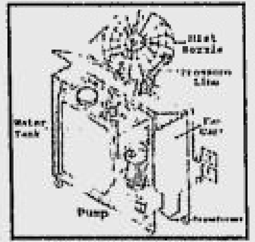

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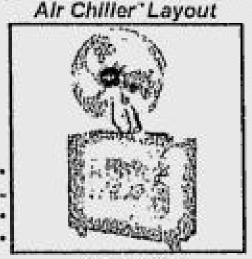

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BSP to use technology vs speculators

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has launched a crackdown against big traders in the black market who are hoarding dollars and circumventing regulations, thereby contributing to the peso's depreciation.

In an interview, Deputy Governor for bank supervision and examination Alberto Reyes said the BSP has started to build a database to catch traders who are sidestepping the rules to speculate against the peso.

As the peso struggled to break past its all-time low of P55.75 to the dollar in recent months, the BSP tightened spot foreign exchange rules. For instance, it further restricted banks' allowable dollar purchases. But it failed to counter pressures arising from the informal or black market.

Big dealers, especially in Binondo—or Manila Chinatown—are suspected of using foreign currency deposit units (FCDU) to park dollars sourced from the banking system.

Reyes said the database would detect the "splitting" of accounts.

At present, dollar purchases below $5,000 from the banks are not subject to stringent documentation, while larger transactions require plenty of paperwork.

Reyes said some traders were taking advantage of this by buying dollars under different names. The BSP earlier admitted it had difficulty in detecting violations.

Aside from curbing threats against the currency, he noted, the database would complement efforts against money laundering.

Last Friday the peso slid back to P53.05 against the dollar on jitters over Standard & Poor's recent credit-rating downgrade, as well as the SARS outbreak in the Philippines.

The World Bank, which recently lowered its outlook on East Asian economic growth, admitted that the killer pneumonia had replaced the Iraq crisis as the most pressing concern in the region.

It was unlikely that the Philippines would emerge unscathed from the epidemic, much less generate a windfall from the plight suffered by neighboring countries, the WB said.

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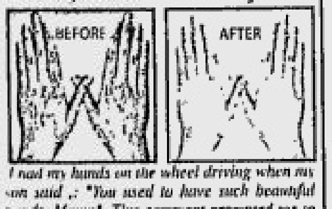

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Palace wishes Ang feud would go away

By Carlito Pablo

MALACAÑANG wants two feuding associates of President Macapagal-Arroyo former publicist Dante Ang and lawyer Arthur "Pancho" Villaraza to settle their differences amicably and quietly.

This was hinted at by presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye in an interview over radio station dzMM yesterday.

"We know that Mr. Ang knows what is the right thing to do under the circumstances," said Bunye. "We'd prefer [the] relationship between him and the other side remain cordial."

For the fourth time yesterday in his newspaper The Manila Times, Ang lashed out at the allegorical dog "Viaje" and his "kennel," whom he has accused of "milking dry" a number of business corporations, some allegedly in behalf of the First Couple.

Ang first came out with his columns against "Viaje" on his front page on April 13, pledging to expose the latter's "mind-boggling shakedowns."

In his article on Sunday titled "If we can kick out presidents, so can we boot out Viaje," Ang admitted he "received calls from friends advising me to settle the issue with Viaje lest the First Couple be dragged into the fray unnecessarily."

As in his previous articles, Ang fell short of identifying "Viaje," however.

But Palace insiders and others believe he was referring to Villaraza and the Villaraza-Angangco Law Office, from which President Macapagal appointed influential officials like Supreme Court Justice Antonio Carpio, Presidential Legal Counsel Avelino Cruz and Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo.

The law firm has been associated with the President and her family since the 1980s. It leases office space in the LTA Building in Makati which is owned by the family of the First Gentleman.

Ang blames "Viaje" for his legal problems, particularly an estafa case filed against him and fellow officers of the thrift bank Bank-Wise.

In the interview, Bunye admitted talking recently to Ang over the phone.

Describing him as a "personal friend," Bunye said, "What he has published are his own views and if I were asked if we had talked, we did."

ANG

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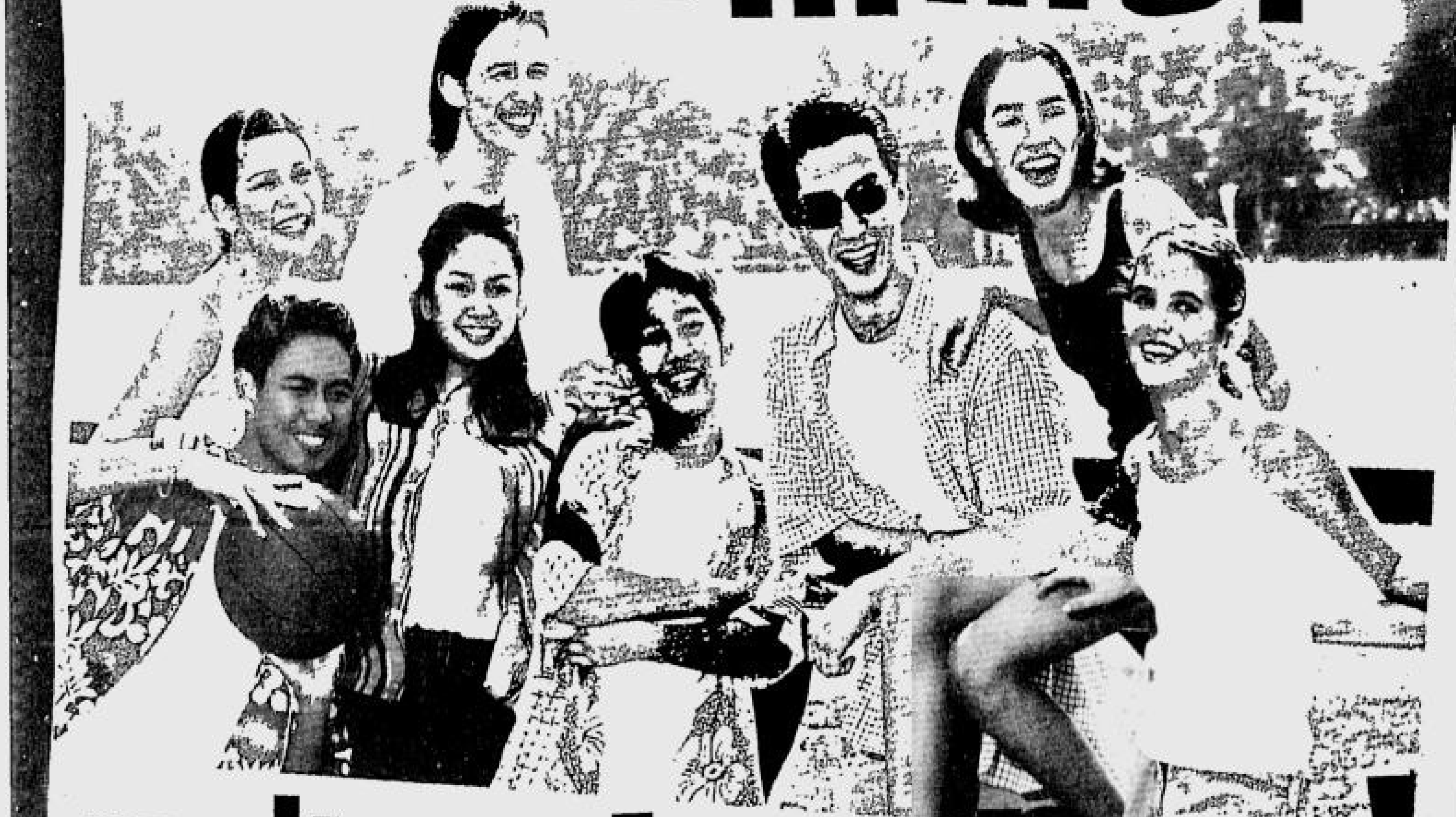

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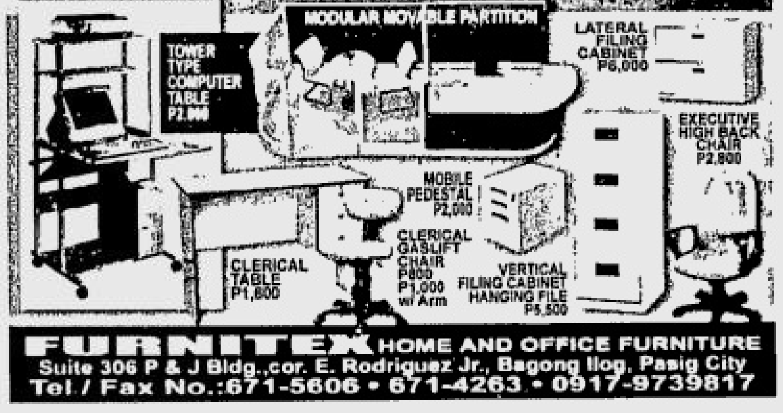
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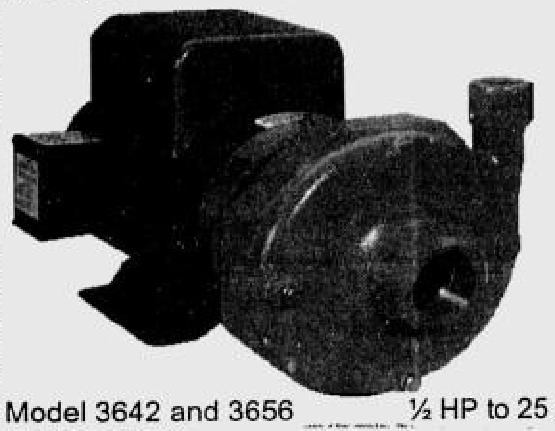

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Braganza's job safe for now

AILING Press Secretary-on-leave Hernani Braganza will keep his job.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has no immediate plans of permanently replacing him while he is on medical leave for treatment of a possible heart condition and diabetes.

"The President is in fact very much concerned about Nani's health," said a source, who asked not to be identified. "She and Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo are personally keeping tabs on his situation."

Braganza has gone on medical leave due to "health problems." He had offered to resign but this was not accepted by the President.

Dr. Garry Lopez of the Makati Medical Center, the First Family's and Romulo's cardiologist, is one of his doctors. Braganza's carotid vein is reportedly giving him problems, a possible indication of a heart condition.

In an interview over radio station RMN, Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said Braganza's leave was "not actually permanent."

"It's up to his physician to say whether he is ready to go back to work," Bunye said.

Asked how long Braganza's leave will be, Bunye said: "That is a medical question."

Sources had said that aside from health problems, Braganza wanted out of his job because he felt unwelcome by other Palace officials.

Braganza and Malacañang chief of staff Rigoberto Tiglao had been feuding over turf since the former's appointment. *Carlito Pablo*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, April 28, 2003
2nd Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 4:23-31
Gospel: Jn 3:1-8

Among the Pharisees there was a ruler of the Jews named Nicodemus. He came to Jesus by night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you have come from God to teach us, for no one can perform miraculous signs like yours unless God is with him."

Jesus replied, "Truly, I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again from above."

Nicodemus said, "How can there be rebirth for a grown man? Who could go back to his mother's womb and be born again?" Jesus replied, "Truly, I say to you: No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Because of this, don't be surprised when I say: 'You must be born again from above.'

"The wind blows where it pleases and you hear its sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. It is like that with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Commentary

Nicodemus had seen the signs done by Jesus and concluded that he is a godly man. Jesus wanted him to see more. He wanted Nicodemus to see that with him and his work, the Kingdom of God has dawned upon the earth. But there is a condition before that can be possible: rebirth in water and the Spirit. It is not enough that a person undergoes the ritual of baptism. The baptized must commit him/herself to the beliefs and practice of the church community and thus have a personal experience of its life in the Spirit. That means to study, understand, and live our faith; to cultivate a personal spiritual life; to actively participate in the liturgical life of the church; and to zealously engage in its work of evangelization and charity.

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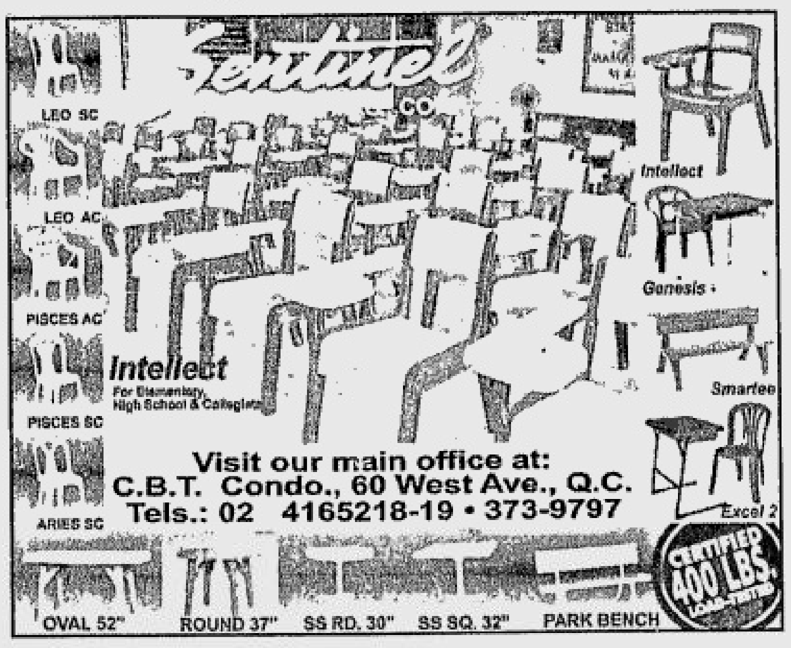
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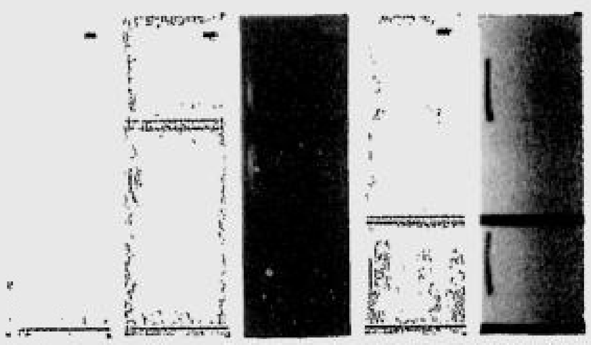

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Vol. 18 No. 139
ISSN
0116-2642

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, APRIL 28, 2003

OPINION

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THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

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Publisher ISAGANI YAMBOT
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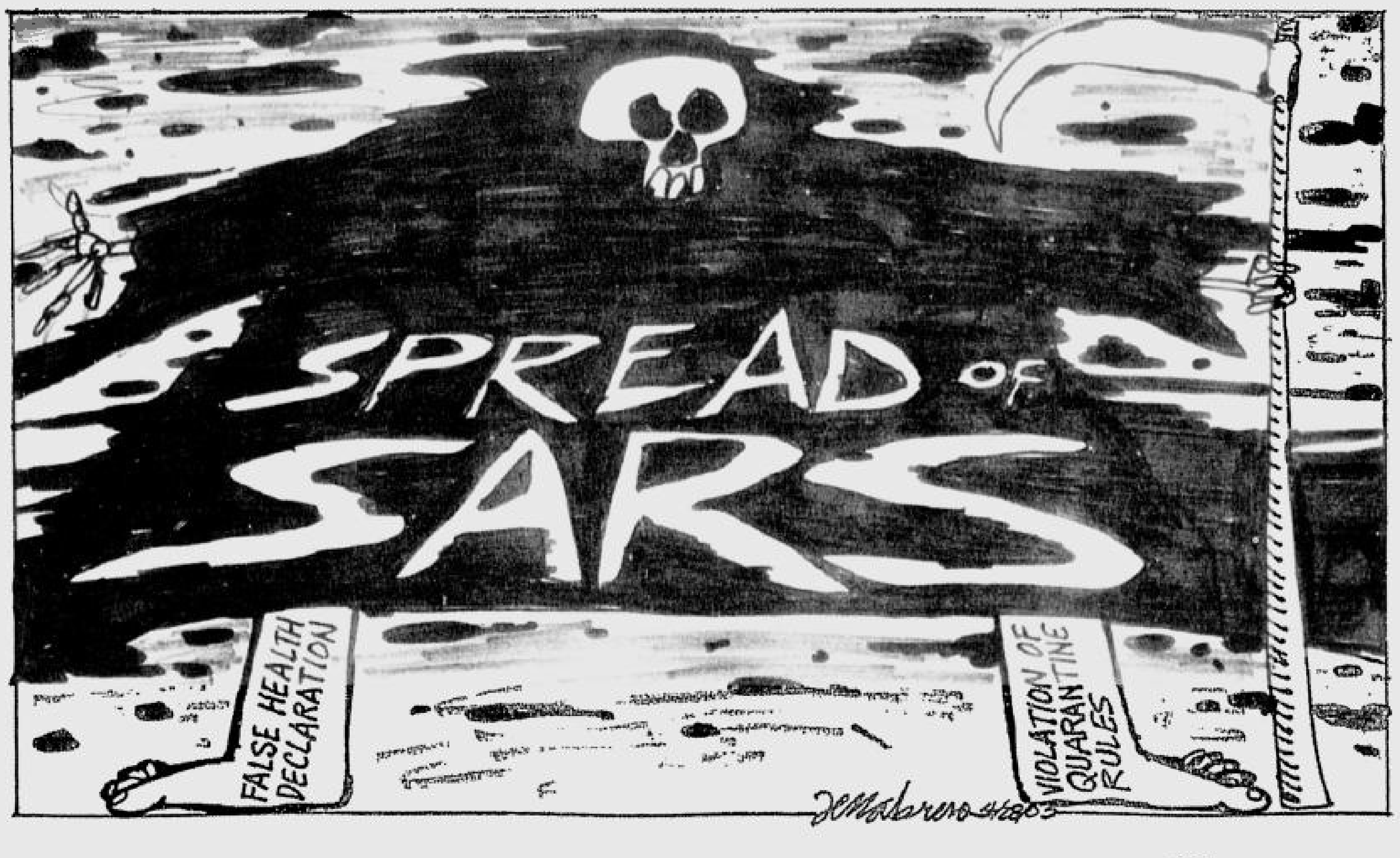


Murder most foul

EDITORIAL

THE MEN were masked, but it wasn't because they were taking precautions against Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. The men who last Monday stopped a van of human rights advocates in Naujan, Oriental Mindoro, abducted five of them, and killed two were suffering from a more lethal virus: criminal intent.

The victims who were found dead the following day, in a bamboo grove in Bansud town, were human rights leaders Eden Marcellana, secretary general of the Alyansa sa Pagsusulong ng Karapatang Pantao in Southern Tagalog (Karapatan-ST), and Eddie Gumanoy, chair of the Kasapian ng mga Samahang Magbubukid sa Timog Katagalugan (Kasama-TK). Marcellana and Gumanoy were in Mindoro to investigate new allegations of human rights violations reportedly committed by the Armed Forces in Pinamalayan and Gloria towns.

The day after the remains of Marcellana and Gumanoy were found, the President called on the Department of Justice to immediately investigate the murders. She blamed armed vigilantes: "We're concerned about charges of vigilantism being aired in relation [to] the killing of activists in Mindoro Oriental," President Macapagal Arroyo said. "When there are such charges, authorities must step in to get to the root of the matter soonest."

According to the survivors and the victims' families, the masked men had introduced themselves as members of the "Alsa Masa"—the anti-communist vigilante group founded in Davao in the 1980s. But others more familiar with the situation in Mindoro saw something else through the subterfuge.

Karapatan and the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan party-list group said Col. Jovito Palparan, head of the 204th Infantry Brigade of the Philippine Army, was responsible for the deaths of the two leaders.

Palparan, since relieved of his post, in what he called a "temporary pullout," denied the allegations. "That's nothing new because every time there are incidents like this, they always blame the military."

Marcellana, the main target of the masked men, hit the headlines last year after exposing human rights abuses in the Southern Tagalog area. These, she claimed, were perpetrated by the military. Palparan apparently returned the favor. "The people are now angry with the likes of Marcellana's group. They're irritating," he said.

They may yet turn out to be more than merely irritating. The special DOJ team headed by Undersecretary Jose Calida, in a surprising though welcome move, has already ruled out the involvement of vigilante groups.

"We are not buying that because vigilante groups don't usually hide their identities. They don't wear bonnets," Calida said.

A highly placed DOJ source went even further, claiming the military itself was behind the abduction of the activists and the torture and summary execution of Marcellana and Gumanoy.

Did Palparan and his men kill the two leaders? "It is possible," the source told the INQUIRER.

This is a surprise, because the last time the accusing finger was pointed firmly in the direction of the military—at the height of the AFP-Abu Sayyaf collusion issue—the government responded by wagging the finger at the military's critics.

And this is welcome, because human rights advocates and the victims' families have viewed the President's order and the DOJ investigation with deep skepticism. Rose Ann Gumanoy's dismissive comment about the President is typical: "We can't expect her to help us. What happened to my father was her wish in the first place."

The roots of this skepticism lie in the blood-stained land of Mindoro, where six have been reported missing and 32 reported killed in the last two years.

Calida referred to the crisis in passing, saying his team had felt unwelcome when they arrived in the province to begin the investigation. "But hopefully, the reign of terror will soon end there," he said.

Missing persons. Torture-slayings. Reigns of terror. Seventeen years after the dictator Ferdinand Marcos was booted out of power, the vocabulary of state-sponsored terror is back.

The President needs to do more than simply warn against vigilantism. She must "get to the root of the matter," yes, but that means unmasking the men in uniform who have murder on their mind.

Quarantine measures against SARS not effective

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

IF a SARS epidemic breaks out in the Philippines, the man to blame is (in case the people want to lynch somebody—aside from Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit) Tourism Secretary Dick Gordon. The talkative Gordon has been quoted in the newspapers and shown on television as against a temporary ban on travelers from SARS-infected countries like China. The reason: it would reduce tourist arrivals in the Philippines and therefore he wouldn't have the numbers to boast of during the senatorial election campaign.

He is the only Cabinet member, he would probably like to gloat, who racked up an improvement in his department despite the economic crisis because of SARS, and therefore the people should elevate him to the Senate. In fact, he seems to be happy that there is a SARS epidemic in China, Hong Kong and Singapore because tourists are coming here instead.

While Singapore "incurred a sharp 58 percent decline in its tourism income, and Hong Kong where the airline Cathay Pacific experienced a 55 percent grounding of its fleet.... the Philippines attained a 2 percent rise in tourist arrivals during the entire quarter," Gordon boasted in yesterday's INQUIRER.

When SARS broke out in these and other countries, Gordon had announced to the world: "Come to the Philippines; it's SARS-free."

But as I warned in the April 2 column, it won't be for long. And true enough, we are no longer SARS-free. We now have at least four confirmed cases, with two deaths. Watch the tourist arrivals decline rapidly.

All because the presidential anti-SARS committee headed by Dayrit failed miserably to prevent the entry of SARS here. We wasted a golden opportunity to protect our people from this scourge because of greed and vanity. We had the advantage of being an archipelago and still being SARS-free but we wasted that. The SARS virus can't swim in the sea. There is only one way for it to enter the Philippines—via travelers. So we should have been more strict with travelers, especially those coming from SARS-infected countries, as other more responsible countries have done.

So the undermanned and overworked Bureau of Quarantine relied mainly on the voluntary declaration of incoming passengers if they feel any of the SARS symptoms, and of taking their temperature to see if they have any fever.

But you cannot rely on the honestly of travelers who don't want to be quarantined and lose time. If our supposedly responsible congressmen, alleged leaders of our nation, refused to be quarantined when they returned from a junket to China, what more the ordinary traveler? It is human nature.

As for the fever, not having it is not a guarantee that a person is not a carrier, as shown by the case of Adela Catalon, who died of SARS after infecting her father (who also died of it) and possibly hundreds of others who may now be infecting more people. Adela, a Filipino caregiver, came from Toronto, Canada, where there is an outbreak of SARS, and "JP," now quarantined in Cebu, came from Hong Kong where she worked as a domestic.

The quarantine people at the airport should have paid them more attention, coming as they were from SARS-infected countries, but they breezed through the screening because they had no fever and they didn't declare any SARS symptoms.

As it turned out, they were already infected with the virus. Now the Philippines is officially known in the whole world as "SARS-infected" which today is equivalent to being a leper in the old days. Libya has already banned Filipino workers from entering its borders. We can expect other countries to do the same.

The effort is now to contain the outbreak here. Fine. But as long as the same ineffective measures are used at the ports of entry, the chances of more SARS cases slipping through the screening process increases. At least 70,000 travelers enter through the Ninoy Aquino International Airport every day, not including the Cebu and Laoag airports and the seaports. By the law of averages, more SARS cases are bound to slip through.

Why don't we follow the example of Libya and Malaysia of temporarily banning the entry of travelers from SARS-infected countries? somebody has asked. The presidential committee pussyfoots. It is afraid to offend the affected countries. Gordon was shown on TV as saying in effect: "China is a big country. We cannot afford to offend it." But the real reason, I suspect, is that China, Hong Kong and Singapore are the fourth, fifth and sixth tourist markets of the Philippines. Gordon doesn't want the tourist arrivals to decline. Never mind if the whole Filipino nation will be put at risk, never mind if many Filipinos may die, Gordon needs the numbers of tourist arrivals to boast about during the senatorial campaign.

Gordon even belittles the SARS epidemic. "Look, there were some four million cases of pneumonia throughout the whole world in 1995," he said. "SARS has killed less than 400 people." Tell that to the families of SARS victims. And wait until SARS has run its course. It is just beginning. The number of deaths may be enough for callous-minded people, even Gordon.

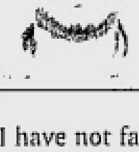
What's wrong with being more strict with travelers from SARS-infected countries? It would be only temporary, only during the emergency. Other more responsible countries are already doing it to protect their citizens. Why not us?

We are visa-free for certain countries, particularly Asean nations. But we can temporarily change the policy during this emergency to require visas. And then our embassies and consulates can more carefully screen travelers wanting to come to the Philippines.

Our officials should spare no effort to protect our people.

Demolition jobs

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

I GOT a note from Billy Esposo, someone I just met recently but whom I've known for years for being an indefatigable e-mail writer. He has been getting e-mails from Rina David and me of late, he said. There was only one problem: He was sure they did not come from us. Their content was totally out of character.

One note from "Rina" said:

"You may need fresher ideas, so maybe you should write about how the Manila Times columnists had bought the Saddam propaganda hook-line-and-sinker *(sic)*.... So what's that latest story about INQUIRER columnists on Saddam's payroll?"

Another note asked Billy to read an item in BBC Online entitled, "The 'Apache' farmer's tale." It said: "Iraqi farmer Ali Minqash was credited by Baghdad with downing a US helicopter with an old carbine—now he's denying it."

And the one from "me" said: "De Quiros wants you to read this story from the Manila Bulletin." It goes on to identify the particular item. "Notice how well Jess Elbinias wrote his opinion on separation of church and state. Maybe you can improve your writing and make it closer to Jess' style."

Esposo of course is a most discerning fellow, as shown by his ability to discern, and protest, the American agenda in Iraq. And whose epicurean girth must instantly dispel any suggestion he has any communistic leanings. (Sorry, couldn't resist that.) But it does not really take much discernment to see through the forgery. Why should any columnist from the INQUIRER who has been critical of George Bush's war point to kindred spirits from her favorite newspaper as being the beneficiaries of Saddam's beneficence?

As for me, I've repeatedly apologized to readers that it's all I can do to read my e-mail, much less reply to it. I also do not normally commend other newspapers to the attention of people when I can always draw it to the one I write for, with more salutary effects on their intellectual horizons. And finally, though I have been writing columns for close to a decade and a half now, and have been rewarded with a fairly enthusiastic following, I have not fallen into the habit of referring to myself in the third person. Julius Caesar used to do that, at least in Shakespeare's imagination, as in: "Et tu Brute? Then fall Caesar." I am not Caesar.

The wonder though is how the forger managed to send the messages through our servers. But as Billy tells me, a tekkie friend of his says it's easy, and has sent him an e-mail from the President of the Philippines to prove his point. The notes above are crude, but it is not unthinkable that they may become more polished in time—the staffs of dirty-tricks departments have been known to show good learning curves. Maybe it's just a prank, maybe the people doing this have resources. My friends—and enemies—would be well advised to be leery of private commentaries from me. The only things I send outside of columns are love letters. Or text notes.

As to the oodles of money I got from Saddam and Osama bin Laden, I have put it in escrow in the Amanah Bank. With instructions to be used to help Salman Rushdie and others like him who were persecuted for writing things like "The Satanic Verses." Intolerance, Christian or Muslim, secular or religious, local or foreign, is detestable in all its forms.

* * *

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo says it's not about money, it's about humanitarianism and democracy. Well, some people have been known to want to give abundantly of what they have not got.

The irony piles up faster than you can say "mercenary." At the very least, we want to help reconstruct another country when we cannot even help reconstruct our own. Or help ourselves, which is yet another irony, as a friend points out. A people who have been known to loot everything, from art museums to funeral parlors (we use the dead to legalize street gambling), from national coffers to local granaries, are determined to send a force to prevent Iraqis from looting their country. I cannot imagine the Iraqis being immensely comforted.

But the one that takes the cake is the part about democracy. That's the part where you feel the exquisite pain of gout while laughing.

I do not know how the families of Eden Marcellana and Eddie Gumanoy in particular will take that. Marcellana and Gumanoy were the two officials of a mission who were investigating reported human rights violation by the military in Mindoro who were themselves abducted and slain. Their autopsy, which showed smashed faces and broken bones, indicated they were heavily tortured before they were killed. Col. Jovito Palparan, head of the military battalion there and chief suspect in the human rights violations, has blithely dismissed it as the work of residents irate at NPA sympathizers.

To find a comparable event, you have to go back to the murders of Lando Olalia and his driver. What makes it comparable is the brazenness of the deed, alongside its brutality, done with no fear of punishment, indeed done with a sense, or certainty, that Malacañang would applaud it in private even if it frowned on it in public. More than money, humanitarianism is the one thing we have in very short supply in this country.

But those are our credentials for exporting democracy to Iraq.

In that respect at least, GMA is not alone, *hindi siya nag-iisa*. She shares the company of George Bush, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfovich and Richard Perle, who say as well it is about freedom and democracy while they fight off the UN more fiercely than their troops fought off the Iraqis to reap the spoils of war. At least Cuba Gooding Jr. was a lot more forthright in "Jerry Maguire," and made famous the line: "Show me the money."

* * *

Comments to dequiros@info.com.ph

Incredible starting capital for RM

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

SEN. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. has perked up the 2004 derby by saying he's available. The amiable senator is heir to the name that's perhaps one of the most loved and revered in Philippine politics—an incredible starting capital. Moreover, in his nearly two terms in the Senate, Magsaysay Jr. has done nothing to tarnish that name. He is perceived to be a decent and non-traditional politician. His problem, however, is that he has been too low-profile—he needs more projection. Moreover, Magsaysay's image is too nebulous—people have to know where he stands on most issues.

* * *

The campaign to amend the Constitution got an unexpected boost recently when former President Fidel V. Ramos was quoted in a speech in Baguio City as opining that amendments to the Constitution should be "fast-tracked" in order to rid Philippine politics of dynasties and turncoats as well as opportunists. FVR noted that while the Constitution frowns on political dynasties and turncoatism, Congress has failed to enact an enabling law to enforce this; instead, said FVR, politicians go around the dynasty provision and term limit by "getting their wives, children and in-laws to run for their old position." I recall that in the eighth or ninth Congress, a bill was filed by some senators, led by Senate President Jovito Salonga, banning political dynasties, but it never prospered. Indeed there are many infirmities of our political system that ought to be corrected, and the longer we postpone the correction the worse the system becomes.

* * *

An INQUIRER story quoted Dr. Virgilio Sienes of the Negros Oriental Provincial Hospital as saying that while the provincial hospital has an isolation ward, it is still not prepared for SARS. It also quoted Sr. Gloria Ibalio, medical director of the Holy Child Hospital, as admitting that her hospital is likewise not equipped to handle SARS cases and that any patient would be sent to Manila. In General Santos City, persons exhibiting SARS-like symptoms are told not to go directly to clinics or hospitals but to wait instead for medical teams in their homes. The reasoning obviously is that the city's medical facilities are not equipped to isolate and contain the disease. The INQUIRER also quoted provincial doctors admitting to a dilemma on how to handle SARS.

* * *

In the dreadful event of SARS spreading in this country, the likelihood is that, as in China, the main battle would be fought in the provinces and hinterlands where most returning OFWs may be found, and where ignorance often thrives. But the reality is that many provincial hospitals and personnel would be unable to cope with an outbreak. This is not surprising, as even facilities and personnel in more advanced countries have been confounded by how to contain this mystery disease. All these concerns, however, only increase the citizens' apprehension about SARS. They worry that if they get sick, they have no place to go for treatment.

* * *

The candor with which some provincial hospital authorities admit their lack of preparedness for SARS only shows the magnitude of this most urgent problem facing both the government and the private sector at the moment. Just how do we equip our provincial medical facilities for an emergency SARS situation? President Macapagal-Arroyo assures us that there will be at least one SARS center in each region and that certain hospitals have already been selected in key cities to handle the disease. She is also releasing P500 million to upgrade their facilities, on top of the P1-billion emergency fund set aside earlier for fighting SARS.

But the problem is that upgrading their facilities does not happen overnight, as many of those hospitals are woefully inadequate even for the common, ordinary diseases. In a hinterlands outbreak, mobile medical teams might be a more effective emergency response.

* * *

The possibility of a SARS outbreak brings the capability of our provincial hospitals into sharper and more urgent focus, and drive home the point that the government and the private sector will have to team up closely. An area for close cooperation which comes to mind is in mobilizing medical teams that would treat afflicted people in the hinterlands, and information teams that would educate the people on the preventive aspects of the disease. Containing SARS depends a lot on intelligence-gathering and information—as the WHO says, we have to find the sick people. Another area for cooperation is in the furnishing of isolation wards with equipment, e.g., air-conditioning and medical supplies.

* * *

One area where private sector cooperation is much appreciated this summer is in the provision of clean rest rooms to motorists by service stations along the highways. I wish to particularly salute two service stations I saw recently: the Caltex service station in Capas, Tarlac, whose owner I failed to identify, and the Shell station in Rosario, La Union, owned by Susan Tabora Gutierrez. Both stations have working toilets and the basic essentials and are reasonably clean. Congratulations.

* * *

For its year-long diamond jubilee observance that closed late last year, the Carmelite Monastery in Gilmore, QC held a lecture series in various universities and colleges in Metro Manila, featuring 13 distinguished speakers on a variety of religious and secular topics of national and global interest. To reach a bigger audience, the nuns decided to compile the talks into a book edited by former UP and now Kalayaan College President Jose Abueva titled, "The Filipino Spiritual Culture, Social Transformation and Globalization." The book, an invaluable source of insight, is available at various outlets, including the Carmelite Monastery in Gilmore, at P250 a copy. Direct inquiries to them at 724-2990.

'SARS' in Davao City

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Carlos Isagani T. Zarate

"IS it no longer safe for a Muslim to go there? I want to go to Davao City but I am afraid of getting arrested for no reason at all," Joseph Adam, a town engineer from Cotabato province, was quoted by the news agency Mindanews as saying in reaction to the series of abductions and warrantless arrests of Moro residents in the aftermath of the twin-bombings that hit Davao City.

Adam's reaction summed up the collective concern raised not only by the Moro community in Davao but also by church and human rights groups, particularly after the city and its environs were placed under the so-called "state of lawless violence." These concerns, no matter how nonchalantly—and, sometimes insolently—dismissed by authorities, are clearly not without basis. Several hours after the April 2 bombing of Sasa Wharf, Davao City's main seaport, grenades were lobbed at several mosques in the city. In the following days, at least six Moro residents were reported to have been abducted by hooded armed men on board unmarked vehicles. Among those abducted and who are still missing are Datu Sabdullah Ala, a community leader of Maa Riverside; Ustadz Alimudin Zulkiple and Ladzmar Jumadael, both of Sirawan, Toril; and Janita Ibaez.

On April 14, 2003, during an Interfaith Peace Dialogue attended by no less than presidential assistant for Mindanao and government peace panel chair Jesus Dureza and ranking officers of the police and the military, Moro participants have again questioned the apparent "profiling" of Muslims in the government's drive against those responsible for the Davao bombings.

"We're afraid to move around because when there is a bombing, when there are violent incidents, we are always blamed. They would immediately round up Muslims and brand them members of this and that group," commented Datu Romy Umpar, a Maranao resident, during the dialogue.

The anxiety among the Moro populace must have been so grave if the dwindling attendance in religious worship in the city's different mosques is an indication. Aleem Mahmod Adilao, president of the Ulama League of the Philippines-Davao and one of the convenors of the Bishop-Ulama Conference, lamented that the apparent failure of the authorities to stop the harassment on Muslims prompted them to take measures like the buddy system to protect themselves.

Seeking to assuage the insecurity of those who attended the dialogue, Dureza initiated the creation of a task force headed by the Office of Muslim Affairs to look into the complaints of Moro residents. The task force also include representatives from the Commission on Human Rights, Public Attorney's Office and Integrated Bar of the Philippines.

Yet, hardly were the results of the dialogue set in place, when another Moro community was "singled out" when members of the Task Force Davao, a composite of Marines and Army Special Forces deployed in the city immediately after the April 2 bombing, conducted a "martial law-style" raid on a coastal Moro community on the pretext of looking for terrorists and alleged arms landing.

Three hundred soldiers, backed by two Simba armored personnel carrier, conducted a house to house search without presenting any search warrant. The troops left empty-handed but had clearly imprinted a message of fear in the hearts and minds of the stunned residents. Some houses had big X marks put on them without any explanation as to what the marks meant.

This type of "lawless" raid surely will not pacify the already fearful Moro residents. Living in continued insecurity and discrimination is far worse than going through quarantine for being suspected as a SARS carrier.

Yet, as the situation in Davao now shows, the government in effect has declared that the Moro community is a "Systematically and Arbitrarily Restricted Sector (SARS)."

* * *

The Macapagal administration is playing with semantics. In response to the growing clamor of business groups, some local officials and other concerned groups, President Macapagal claimed that there is really nothing for her to lift at all since Davao City and its environs were not placed under a "state of lawless violence."

She forgot, conveniently perhaps, that immediately after the seaport bombing, she was widely heard on radio declaring the city under a state of lawless violence, which declaration was echoed several times by press statements from her office and other government press agencies. She also conveniently forgot that as commander in chief there are only three instances under the Constitution when the armed forces may come in to perform purely police functions, that is when the country or part of it is under a state of "lawless violence, invasion or rebellion." If there is no state of lawless violence in Davao City, what justification is there then for the continued presence of military personnel conducting raids and even assisting in the demolition of shanties of urban poor dwellers?

* * *

LEGAL EDUCATION: In compliance with the Supreme Court mandate, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines Davao City Chapter will hold a two-day Mandatory Continuing Legal Education seminar on May 15-16, 2003 at The Venue, Jacinto Extension, Davao City. Subjects to be tackled include the Tax Aspect of the SPAV Law and the Anti-Money Laundering Law.

* * *

Comments at karlos_z23@hotmail.com or kar_laws@yahoo.com

Fomenting the Second Philippine-American War

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

IMPERIALIST giants CNN and BBC won back lost audiences of Arab elites and the global Left last week by bemoaning the cruel fate of Baghdad museums that fell victim to war, (though it looked like insider looting to me). But the guardians of ancient heritage seem to have fallen victim to modern idolatry. Local cognoscenti of Iraqi antiquity berate the barbaric Anglosphere for not using deadly force to defend Mesopotamian idols and Sumerian harps from desperate, hungry looters. *Balimbing* warmongers! Shoot the looter, why don't you, but don't shoot the precious loot. Well, too bad for the idolaters, lucky for the looters—GI Joe forgot to bring the neutron bombs.

Yet, did they lift a stinking slipper against Saddam's dictatorship? No! They woefully mourn in cuneiform for broken busts of hardened dust, yet ignore Amnesty's reports on the lost treasures of mothers and sisters—raped; of outcast whores and homos—beheaded; and the people of Iraq—looted of their loved ones by the official chair of the Iraqi National Museum. (Guess which strain of DNA that used to be.) Childish fears of death move us to worship frozen images of life, but what a false eternity and artless beauty is a museum, viewed from the bottomless pit of Abu Ghraib prison. But something else happened in the holy city of Karbala last week.

* * *

IMAM Hussain, religious freedom fighter, son of Fatimah, grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, the Light of Islam, uttered these immortal words before his martyrdom in defense of Islam at the Battle of Karbala fighting the Umayyad tyrant of Damascus, Yazid Caliph Muawiyah on the 10th of Muharram, 61 years after Hejira:

"Don't you see that the truth is not followed and the falsehood is not discouraged? The situation is so severe that a Believer wishes to meet Allah. Today I don't see death but prosperity, since living with tyrants is nothing but disgust and disgrace."

Syrian armies massacred his kith and kin, desecrated the Kaaba of Ibrahim at Mecca, stole the meteorite of Allah's mercy, and enslaved the Shia people. Seven centuries after Jesus Christ was crucified at Calvary, Imam Hussain was scourged and beheaded at Karbala. But in his death, the faith of the Shia lived, reanimated by powerful Apache medicine men and Thomas Jefferson.

Religious suppression in Iraq suffers the annihilating blow of the contrapuntal savagery of two million liberated Shia Muslim spiritual pilgrims dancing in high energy trance at Karbala: "*Islam zinda hota hai hur Karbala! Iraq ke baad Allah Imam Hussain!*" (repeat 2,000X, crescendo) Such audacious freedom of speech and religion would have been a real blood-Ba'ath under Saddam. So I'm sure that Imam Hussain is enjoying a nice cup of *tsokolate-eh* and *baklava* in paradise with Ben Franklin and Jose Rizal, playing a game of ecumenical *tuktukan*, plotting new conspiracies against tyrants and religious terrorists, watching CNN and chuckling, "Yankee, go home!"

But some Catholic bishops still insist the war was "immoral" even as the Pope de-escalates and calls for international cooperation. They make towering moral accusations they would not put arms and honor to. Yet the men in cassocks and deadlier crackpot cults darkly warn:

"Iraq and Mindanao, we will make into a quagmire for GMA and America with the help of politicians and our allies in media and academe. They won the war, but damn if they'll win the peace. GMA had no permission so now we will make it hard to organize those vulture Filipino firms and mercenary OFWs for reconstruction in Iraq. We will punish disobedient GMA for sending humanitarian aid to the Iraqi people, who have been freed of dictatorship illegally. It would be immoral charity. That's it. We will give moral license to mental paralytics who chair powerful committees in Congress and Senate, to take potshots at anything the government does that tends to justify the war, like a better life, food, medicine and peace for the Iraqi people. We can say it's taking from the Filipinos. Apolinario Lozada and Joker Arroyo are already at it. Freedom shouldn't grow from the barrel of a gun. Better to live in peace under a dictatorship like we did under Marcos!"

"We can disarm little bitty Gloria by a constant barrage of blind demands for peace on any issue. We must help our oppressed brothers against the government's peace and order campaign and the invading Kano. The CPP/NPA can be relied on to create trouble between Muslims and Christians against the selfish territorial integrity of a weak republic. We can marginalize the hawkish GMA, turn the people against the government. Separatists have a right to their own fundamentalist state in Mindanao with Jemaah Islamiyah. That way the refugees are safe from the military."

"We shall do anything as long as it foments a second Philippine-American War. Then we shall have justice. Let's even up the 600,000 to 15,000 score, last updated at Bud Bagsak, remember O brave Tausugs? Bomb them everywhere you find them. In Davao and Zamboanga, in Manila and Cebu. Cut them like snakes! Burn them where they stand! They will surrender to the power of the people's *fedayeen*."

"That's the best way to defend the Constitution, in a republic that has never disestablished our Catholic Taliban state religion to begin with. How moot. Plus, we were able to change the subject from rapist pedophiliac clergy and irresponsible hierarchs last year with 'War is always a defeat for humanity.' Paleoliberals attacked Methodist Bush and Anglican Blair instead of the Catholic Pope because of that."

* * *

Comments to deanjbocobo@yahoo.com

Were SARS photos worth the risk?

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

LAST April 23, the INQUIRER published on its front page a photo of the road leading to the barangay in Alcala, Pangasinan where Adela Catalon stayed for several days before she succumbed to what the World Health Organization believes to have been a case of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

The following day, the newspaper carried an account of the photographer who took that picture, Val Handumon, on how some people in Tarlac shooed him away when they learned that he had been to Catalon's barangay.

That photo mission drew sharp criticism from reader Mybelle GoBio. She said she "does not feel any sympathy at all toward him. I think he and the INQUIRER should be more responsible! The town was put in isolation for the purpose of preventing any spread of SARS in the event Ms Catalon inadvertently spread the SARS virus.

"By sending him there and letting him interact with the 'isolated people,' the INQUIRER just succeeded in making the preventive measure a failure! Mr. Handumon should stay home and go into voluntary isolation as well!!! SARS is no joke and everybody should be more careful and cooperate with the government's efforts to prevent or minimize the spread of SARS here. How can true isolation be implemented if there are people who can freely interact with 'isolated people' then move on to another town to again interact with other folks?"

This is not the first time the INQUIRER had an encounter with the dreaded virus. A month ago, one of its reporters went to China to cover the inauguration of an exhibit on Philippine-made goods and products. Upon his return, he went on voluntary quarantine. Ten days later, he emerged from isolation without showing any of the symptoms that characterize the SARS illness.

Part of the risks

Was it necessary for the newspaper to send a photographer to Catalon's barangay? Yes, said the editor in chief. She believes the value of the news reports on the quarantine of the residents would be enhanced if pictures accompanied them.

She conceded the photographer took a risk in entering the area. But she considers that one of the hazards of photojournalism. It's similar to the dangers that photographers brave when they accompany soldiers in military missions or take photos of armed conflicts from the side of the rebel groups.

I share the reader's concern that the INQUIRER was rather overzealous in the pursuit of the news when its photographer ventured into that place. Oh, what journalists would do just to get a scoop, even to the extent of putting themselves and their loved ones in harm's way. Perhaps, there were other ways of taking the photos without breaking the ordered isolation, like from the air.

If it's any consolation to those who question the wisdom of the photo mission, the photographer did not touch anything or talk to anyone in the place. He was conscious of possible contamination so he made sure he was not within "spitting distance" of anybody. All the shots he took were from afar and there was no possibility of droplets from the mouths or noses of the residents hitting any part of his body.

Extravagance

Going to another subject matter, a reader from Bacolod City complained about the four-page supplement on the debut of the only child of businessman Antonio Martel and Belen Ticzon that came out in the April 6 issue of the INQUIRER.

He wrote: "Last Sunday, the paper gave four pages, Section K, to the birthday party of a young American. After the bombing at Davao Airport, I searched in vain in a number of issues of PDI for a list of names of those who died and those who were injured. I saw a partial list of names of those who died in the more recent bombing.

"Why did PDI give four pages to a birthday party that clearly was an extravagant affair? Is it socially responsible to do this at a time when tens of thousands of Filipinos have been displaced by the war in Central Mindanao? Four pages to the birthday party of a young American and no list of the victims of the first bombing in Davao?

"Did someone pay for section K last Sunday? If they did, why was that not clearly stated? If nobody paid for it why did the publisher choose to give so much space and use so much paper for an item that wasn't news and certainly wasn't newsworthy?"

I reviewed the back issues of the newspaper to validate the reader's complaint that the INQUIRER did not do a complete job in reporting the bombing of the waiting shed outside the Davao airport on March 4. It's true, the news reports did not carry the complete list of the victims.

When asked why no such listing was made, the section editor explained that no official breakdown of the names of the victims was released or made available by the police authorities or hospital officials concerned. The reporters were wary about using the information given by bystanders on the identities of the dead and wounded. Coming out with the wrong names would only add to the anxiety of the already jittery residents of Davao City.

Human interest

After getting the basic information, the reporters wrote about vignettes in the lives of some of the victims that had interesting human interest angles. So stories were written about the American missionary who went to the airport to meet a colleague who was coming to assist him in his work, and the family that was excited to welcome home a daughter who had been working for years in the Middle East only to lose a mother and a young child.

While it would have been ideal for the INQUIRER to publish the casualty list, I think the section editor should not be faulted for the omission. Reviewing the accounts about the incident, Davao City was sheer bedlam during and after that fateful day. It was the first time in more than four years that the city was hit by a terrorist bombing. The confusion was understandable.

Finally, the advertising staff of the newspaper told me that the four-page supplement was a paid advertisement. The same ad came out, without any alterations, in three other broadsheets on the same day.

It was a "pullout" section, meaning, it can be removed from the rest of the newspaper sections and read independently. The letters "ADVT," which usually appears at the bottom of full-page advertisements, were not printed in that ad because its true nature is obvious. In lieu of those letters, the words "special project" were used to indicate that the contents of the four pages were distinct from the standard editorial content of the newspaper.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

Martyrs in Mindoro this Easter

I AM writing this to express my outrage over the murder of Eden Marcellana and Ed Gumanoy, and the abduction of three others in Mindoro.

Eden and Ed just paid the price of human rights advocacy in the country today, and it happened at a time when the whole of Christendom was still gripped by the Lenten and Easter spirit—by that one old biblical story of a martyr's death and resurrection. Eden and Ed, like that human rights activist of the old Lenten story, gave their lives for the cause of thousands of poor peasants, Mangyans and Dumagats of Southern Tagalog who are, to this day, the helpless victims of the government's intensifying anti-terror campaign. The Mangyans and Dumagats are an ignored issue, a vilified issue as the government and even some church personalities cry "propaganda!" But their plight and issues are real, and this is what Eden and Ed saw and heard and fought for, and gave their lives for. But their deaths are not the end of the story.

Living and dying for the cause of justice, truth and genuine peace are also a participation in the life, death, and yes, the resurrection of the Galilean activist—the Christ of Easter.

I am truly blessed to have met and dined with Eden and Ed, and have seen their scarred hands.

—FERDINAND AMMANG ANNO
School of Theology and Religious Studies,
The University of Leeds,
LS2 9JT Leeds,
United Kingdom

GMA can win votes by abolishing PPA

THIS refers to the issue of the PPA.

If President Macapagal-Arroyo decides to run in the 2004 presidential election, she is likely to win the presidency if she will move to abolish the PPA, which the Meralco charges in our power bill. Her decision will be timely and acceptable to many.

GMA should know that most of our countrymen go along with this idea.

As a housewife with three kids, I struggle to pay our daily bills (phone bills, Meralco, tuition, others) and think of how we can survive during these hard times. Other families are having a harder time.

We will be happy if she will heed the call of every Filipino who wishes to enjoy life without the burden of Meralco's PPA. Abolish the purchased power adjustment!

—MARITES M. FIDELSON,
B2 L3 Bloomfields Subd.,
Alapan 1-B, Imus, Cavite

LTFRB issued no order to impound 'colorum' buses

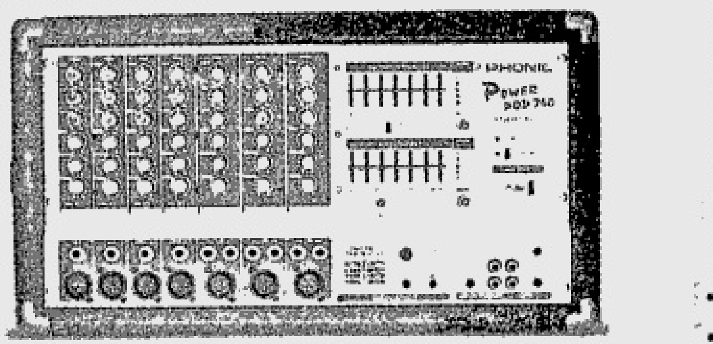
THIS has reference to the letter of Vladimir Tupaz, secretary general of the Trade Unions of the Philippines and Allied Services (Tupas), alleging that thousands of commuters in Metro Manila were unceremoniously left by the roadside when buses were summarily stopped and impounded by enforcers "because I ordered buses without LTFRB-issued stickers stopped and impounded on sight."

There was no LTFRB directive to stop and impound buses without LTFRB-issued stickers. The stickers were issued to buses authorized to operate under valid and existing franchises to distinguish them from those operating without franchises, which means the latter are "colorum" buses.

The law enforcers who apprehended and impounded the "colorum" buses did not and do not get their instructions from the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board since they are not connected with our agency. They simply obtained from the LTFRB the information and data which buses in Metro Manila are covered by existing franchises. This information, in fact, is readily available to the public.

With respect to the issue of fare increases, it must be noted that up to now the LTFRB has not issued any order authorizing a fare hike. In fact, no petition for a bus fare hike has been set for hearing, although such a petition was filed more than a month ago. With the prospect of oil prices going down in the world market and with domestic oil firms starting to reduce the price of oil products, the prospect of a fare hike may be considered at this time slim.

—DANTE M. LANTIN
chair, Land Transportation Franchising
and Regulatory Board,
East Avenue, Quezon City



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Boorish consul at US Embassy

I AM a Filipino and I write to you because I am incensed by the behavior of one of the consuls at the US Embassy who acts with utter disregard of the feelings of Filipinos applying for US visas.

Last March 29, I had the misfortune to face this balding, bespectacled consul on Window 6. This ugly American had earlier been at Window 8 where he castigated applicants in a loud voice, calling attention to himself. I hoped not to have him as our interviewer, but as bad luck would have it, my grandson's number was called for Window 6—and there he was.

My grandson who is 11 is in fifth grade at the Grace Christian High School. He was looking forward to spending three weeks of his summer vacation with me from April 3 to 23 in the United States. I prepared my affidavit of support for his travel as well as my supporting documents; land titles, birth certificates, bankbooks.

But I never got the chance to show them because the consul barked at me: "Step behind the red line, Ma'am. I just want to talk to the father!" The father had accompanied his son to the embassy to prove that he was allowing him to travel with me.

The consul cross-examined him about his wife, who was not with us. He refused to listen to my explanation that I, and not his father, would take care of the boy's expenses. He even threatened to cancel my visa, though for the life of me, I could not see why. Was it because I dared to answer back and because I asked him what his name was?

I have no quarrel with America or Americans, except for this consul who has forgotten that he is a guest in our country. And to think that that Saturday there were 900 confirmed appointments, who had shelled out a total of $90,000 or P4,860,000 to get visas.

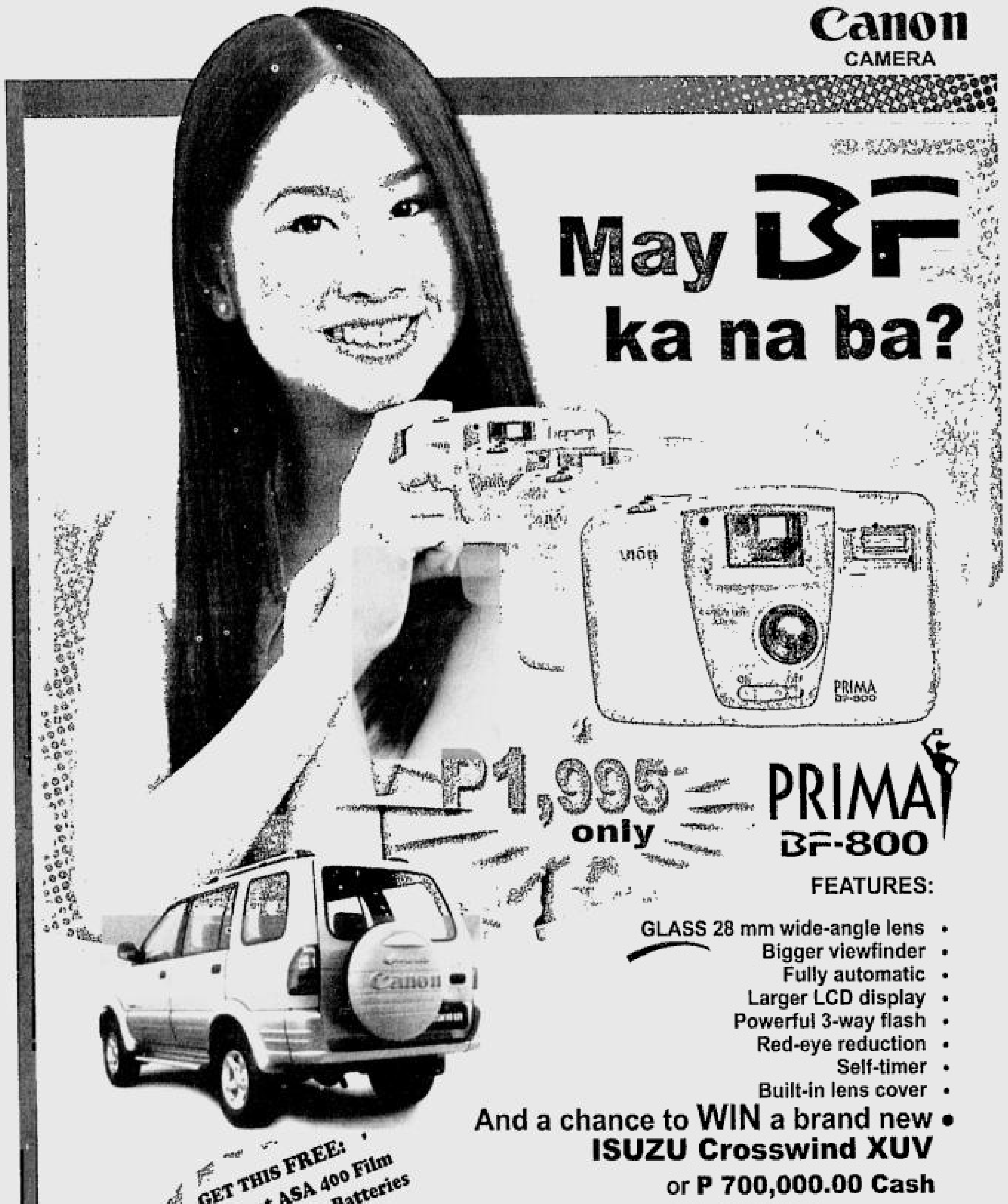
Considering the embassy's income from the applicants, the PLDT calls, the courier service, you would expect at least some courtesy from the consuls.

My grandson will not see America this summer because the consul at Window 6 chose to harp on his father's income and supporting papers, which he did not have with him, and refused to listen to me.

Is it any wonder that at a time when America needs friends, so many are alienated because of US government employees like this consul?

I hope the embassy authorities will look into this matter and call the attention of this consul who is giving their country a bad name.

—NAME WITHHELD ON REQUEST



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From clients to stockholders of Meralco

WE decry the fact that Meralco remains unrepentant and still insists that the Supreme Court erred in its decision to order Meralco to refund its consumers P28 billion in excess charges.

Meralco claims that it can only refund an amount equivalent of one year. Its reason: it is not capable of refunding the full amount, and doing so will force it to bankruptcy, leading to massive blackouts and economic collapse.

The Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) reiterates its demand for the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) to enforce the Supreme Court decision and resolve the case in a manner that will give relief to consumers who have been reeling under the oppressive rates imposed by Meralco and the Lopezes.

Specifically, the FDC proposes the following:

1. Convert the P28 billion into consumer shares of ownership.

On one hand, Meralco is not in a financial position to award the full refund immediately. To ask it to do so will result in the company borrowing part of the funds, with the interest on the loans more likely to be passed on to consumers.

On the other hand, a staggered refund over eight years will not have any significant relief to low-income consumers who are already burdened by very high electricity rates.

Converting the amount into shares is the most feasible option, as it will not involve any cash outlay for Meralco. The P28 billion worth of stocks can be sourced from Meralco's unappropriated and appropriated retained earnings amounting to P27.9 billion and the asset appraisal increment of P25.6 billion, based on Meralco's 2001 financial statement.

2. The P28 billion should be converted into common shares, with voting rights in Meralco stockholders' meetings.

More important than the financial benefits of the refund, converting P28 billion into consumer shares of ownership will represent an important step toward democratizing ownership of Meralco. Further, the conversion can work toward more better governance and management of the utility. Consumers can aggregate their holdings, vote their shares collectively and elect their own representatives to Meralco's board of directors.

The ERC, by deciding on the conversion to shares, will enable consumers to participate in deciding over matters that greatly affect them.

—LIDY B. NACPIL,
secretary general,
Freedom from Debt Coalition,
34 Matiyaga St.,
Central District, Quezon City

Proposed amendments anti-labor

IT was a relief to hear from Dean Froilan Bacungan that the controversial Agile group had no hand in drafting the proposed amendments to the Labor Code currently being finalized by the Congressional Oversight Committee on Labor and Employment. Bacungan said the Center for Research and Special Studies (CRSS) which he heads, was commissioned to draft the proposed amendments.

As Labor Day draws near, however, we need to clarify certain matters in the light of Bacungan's claim that the proposed amendments are "definitely pro-labor." The view of the CRSS that minimum wages are better fixed not by statutes or wage orders but by collective bargaining ignores the realities of labor-management relations in the country. Based on government statistics, only 12.9 percent of employees in the private sector are organized into unions, while about 87 percent are still nonunionized. Worse, out of the unionized employees, only about 528,000 or 13.5 percent have collective bargaining agreements. To do away with legislative wage-fixing in favor of collective bargaining would leave the millions of workers in the country who have no CBAs at the mercy of unscrupulous employers. The proposed amendments will remove an effective deterrent against the commission by employers of unfair labor practices.

It is a pity that such amendments which are anti-labor should come at a time when we are about to celebrate the centennial of Labor Day in the country.

—REMIGIO D. SALADERO JR.,
Pro-labor Legal Assistance Center,
33-B E. Rodriguez Avenue,
Quezon City

Can't we have better and decent TV fare?

IN SMALL towns like ours where newspapers are as rare as the proverbial hen's teeth, we rely much on TV for news and other features. The morning news updates viewers on various topics such as the never-ending military-MILF conflicts, the US-Iraq war, Metro Manila traffic, the fluctuating commodity prices in the market, etc. This program is then followed by "news" detailing juicy stories of movie personalities. While the curious viewers are left guessing who the reporter alludes to in his blind items, I wonder if this gossip portion is necessary. Aren't there more significant aspects in the movie industry worth telling about?

This TV segment leaves much room for improvement or replacement by more relevant topics. Why not give the viewers the palatable facets of the movie stars' lifestyles? Perhaps the reporter could inspire others. Do they have a knack for patch gardening, other hobbies, love for charitable work, etc? Not their illicit relationships and other salacious items, please.

It is said that there is now a "new age," which Mother Church is worried about. There is also the "navel age," which TV exploits to the hilt by overexposure of women's bodies to millions of viewers, including impressionable children. We still wish that we would see better and more decent TV fare than we have these days.

—ADELFA L. ETRUISTE,
Pitogo, Quezon

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

ACEH SEPARATISTS BLAMED

Bomb rips Jakarta airport; 11 injured

JAKARTA—A bomb ripped through a busy passenger terminal at Jakarta's main airport on Sunday, wounding 11 people in an attack that authorities said could be linked to separatists or a regional terror group.

MEMBERS of Indonesia's police forensic unit examine the damage after an explosion went off at Sukarno-Hatta International Airport in Jakarta, Indonesia yesterday A bomb ripped through a busy passenger terminal at Jakarta's main airport on Sunday, wounding 11 people, in an attack that police said was "meant to terrorize." AP

One person was seriously injured in the blast that witnesses said occurred between a fast food restaurant and a ticket counter for Indonesia's national carrier, Garuda. It sent shards of broken window glass flying and hundreds of passengers and workers scurrying for safety.

Indonesian Security Minister Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono told the state news agency Antara that he believed the blast was the work of the Free Aceh Movement, which has been fighting a 26-year secessionist war with the government.

The two sides signed a peace pact on Dec. 9 but violence in the oil- and gas-rich province at the northern tip of Sumatra has flared in recent weeks. The government on Thursday canceled talks scheduled for the weekend that were to address the tensions.

"It is probable that the separatist group was involved in the terrorist acts," Yudhoyono said. "We must increase our alertness."

Zaini Abdullah, a rebel leader exiled in Sweden, denied the group was behind the attack.

"Where is the evidence? I think they are trying to portray us as terrorists and trying to convince the world we are terrorists. But we aren't terrorists. We are freedom fighters," Abdullah said.

Police said later that Jemaah Islamiah—an al-Qaida-linked Islamic militant group believed to be behind last year's Bali bombings—could have orchestrated the airport attack.

"We believe there are three groups that could have done this, the Free Aceh Movement, those linked to the Bali bombings or Jemaah Islamiah," National Police Chief Gen. Da'i Bachtiar said.

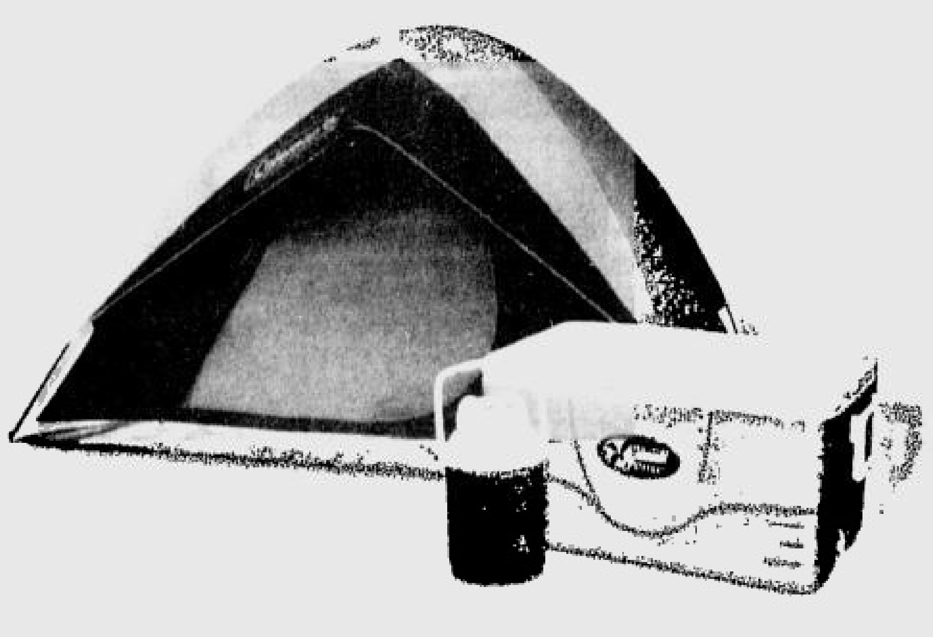
Police said they were questioning six witnesses, but no arrests have been made.

Indonesia is the world's most populous Muslim nation and is struggling to deal with a list of terrorist and secessionist movements that mushroomed after the ouster of the dictator Suharto almost five years ago.

Last October, Islamic radicals blew up two nightclubs on the tourist island of Bali, killing 202 people in the deadliest terrorist strike since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States. Indonesian investigators have arrested 32 suspects, and trials for the main suspects are expected to begin in May.

Sunday's blast—the second bomb in a week—comes four days after Abu Bakar Bashir—the alleged spiritual leader of Jemaah Islamiah—went on trial for treason. *AP*

The sun never sets on these outdoor gear.



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Villa de Oro, Boracay	American breakfast for 4 Set dinner for 4 Boat transfers Sunset cruise Complimentary use of billiard facilities for 2 hours
Bohol Beach Club	Set Breakfast for 4 Round trip transfers from/to airport or pier Complimentary glass bottom boat ride for 20 minutes
Eden Nature Park & Resort, Davao	Set breakfast and dinner for 4 Free coupon for the swimming pool entrance Free entrance to the Fishing Village Free guided tour around the park
Shangri-La Mactan, Cebu	Buffet breakfast for 4 Free swimming pool & non-rental facilities (snorkeling, kayak, paddle) Free use of gym, sauna, jacuzzi Free entrance to Cocoloco Disco Daily City shuttle
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10. All prize packages are transferable but not convertible to cash.
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Rumsfeld cancels Afghanistan trip, Karzai meeting

KABUL—US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has postponed a scheduled Sunday visit to Afghanistan, where he was to meet with Afghan leaders and coalition troops, an Afghan official said.

"Rumsfeld's trip to Kabul has been cancelled for today," said Ajmal Obaid Abidi, an official in President Hamid Karzai's press office.

Abidi said Rumsfeld would however visit later this week although no date had been set.

The US military had earlier announced the postponement of Rumsfeld's visit to Bagram Air Base where he had been due to meet with troops from the US-led coalition force hunting al-Qaida and Taliban holdouts in Afghanistan.

"The visit scheduled for today, 27 April, to Bagram Air Field for a town hall meeting has been postponed," it said in a statement.

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Argentines go to polls

BUENOS AIRES—Argentines head to the polls Sunday to choose a successor to President Eduardo Duhalde amid planned protests by victims of Argentina's worst-ever economic crisis.

Sunday's vote will elect Duhalde's successor from a field of 18 candidates, but those left jobless and destitute by the country's precipitous fall from economic grace plan to protest an election they call "illegitimate." Polls open at 8 a.m. and close ten hours later for Argentina's 25.5 million voters.

Paraguayans also choose their next president Sunday, with Nicanor Duarte of the long-ruling, corruption-ridden Colorado Party tipped as the likely winner.

Results are far less certain in Argentina, where a runoff between Sunday's two top vote-getters appears highly likely.

Duhalde got his current job when Argentina's most recent elected president, Fernando de la Rua, was driven from office by bread riots around the country late in 2001.

The economy has worsened since then, seeing half of Argentina's 36 million people living below the poverty line and a quarter of its workers jobless.

AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

Anti-American lessons

SEOUL—The Education Ministry said yesterday that it will ban any classes violating the "neutrality of education" amid reports that a progressive teachers' union stirred up anti-American sentiments in class. The announcement came days after South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun ordered the ministry to investigate an allegation that members of the Korean Teachers and Educational Workers' Union criticized the US-led war on Iraq in an "open, unduly" manner during classes. *The Korea Herlad/ Asia News Network*

Tikrit water contaminated

TIKRIT—There has been a rise in the number of people with stomach and intestinal infection from drinking contaminated water here. Dr. Ahmad Tabit said 10 days ago, the hospital received only four such cases but now it was up to 15 daily and rising by the day. Although most were children, he said, adults too were affected by unclean water in the area. "We have been giving them fluid infusions and antibiotics. But there can be many complications later like general dehydration so the patient should remain in hospital for a while until we decide he or she can leave.

The Star of Malaysia/Asia News Network

Rumsfeld to offer Franks

WASHINGTON—US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld plans to offer the top Army post to Gen. Tommy Franks, who led coalition forces to victory in Iraq, according to a report here. Secretary of the Army Thomas White announced his resignation abruptly on Friday after a meeting with Rumsfeld and Deputy US Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz. A brief Pentagon statement announcing the departure offered no explanation and did not say when it would take place. Now Rumsfeld, who has clashed with top Army leadership due to his drive to streamline the force, wants to offer Franks the job, according to Knight Ridder Newspapers. *AFP*

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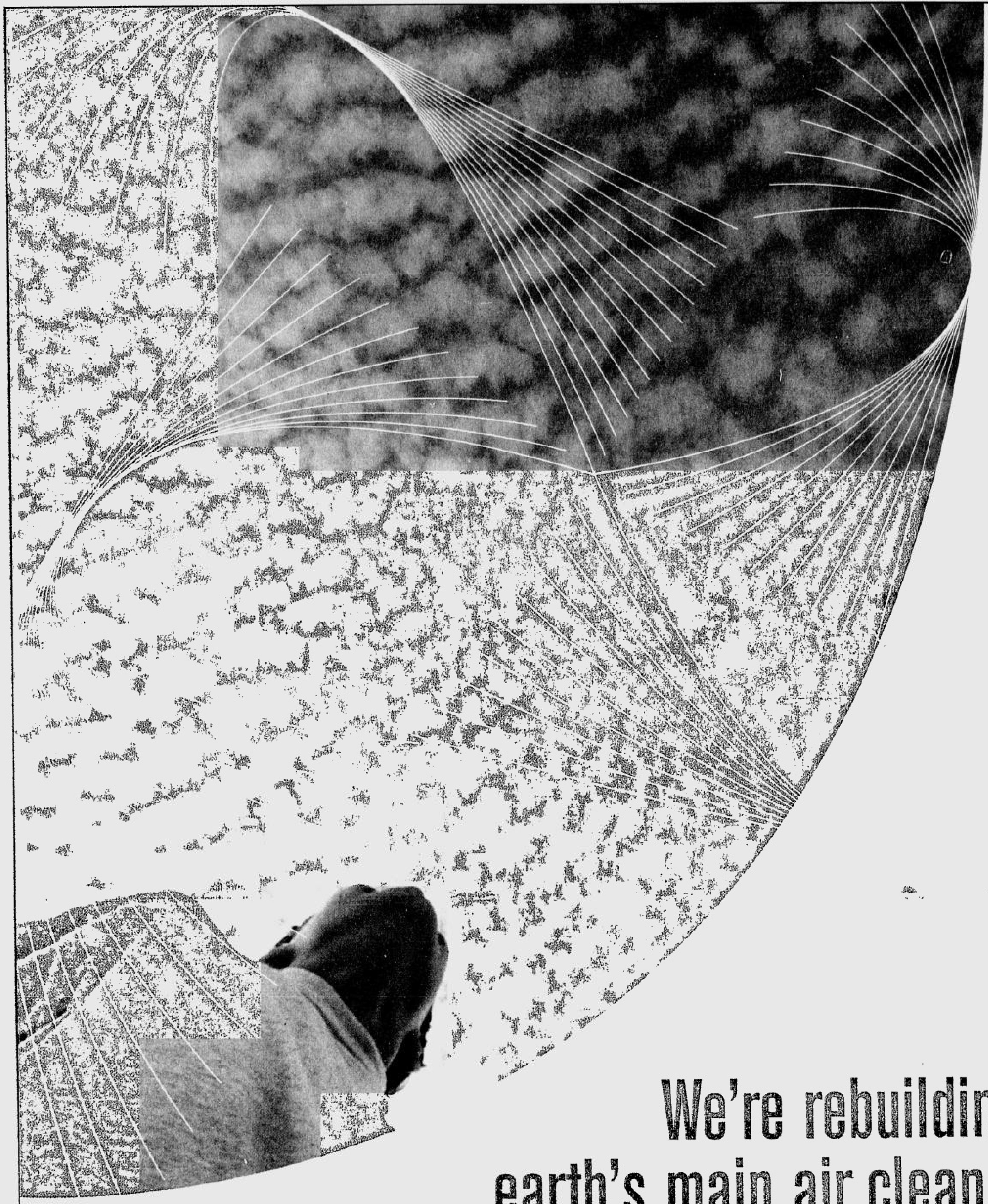

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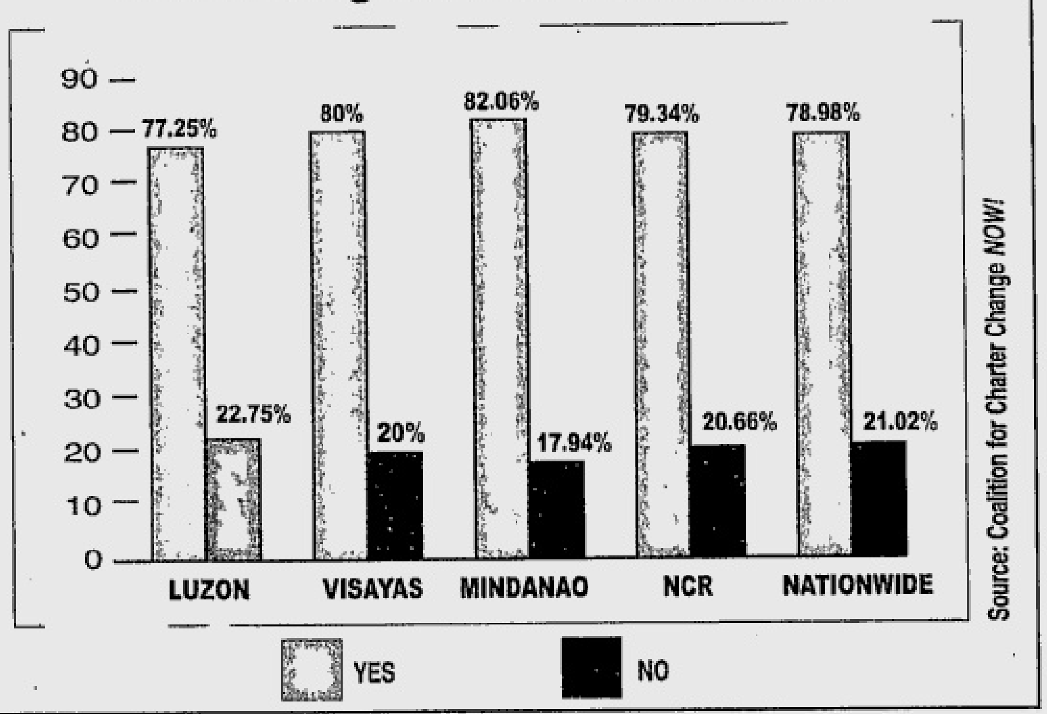
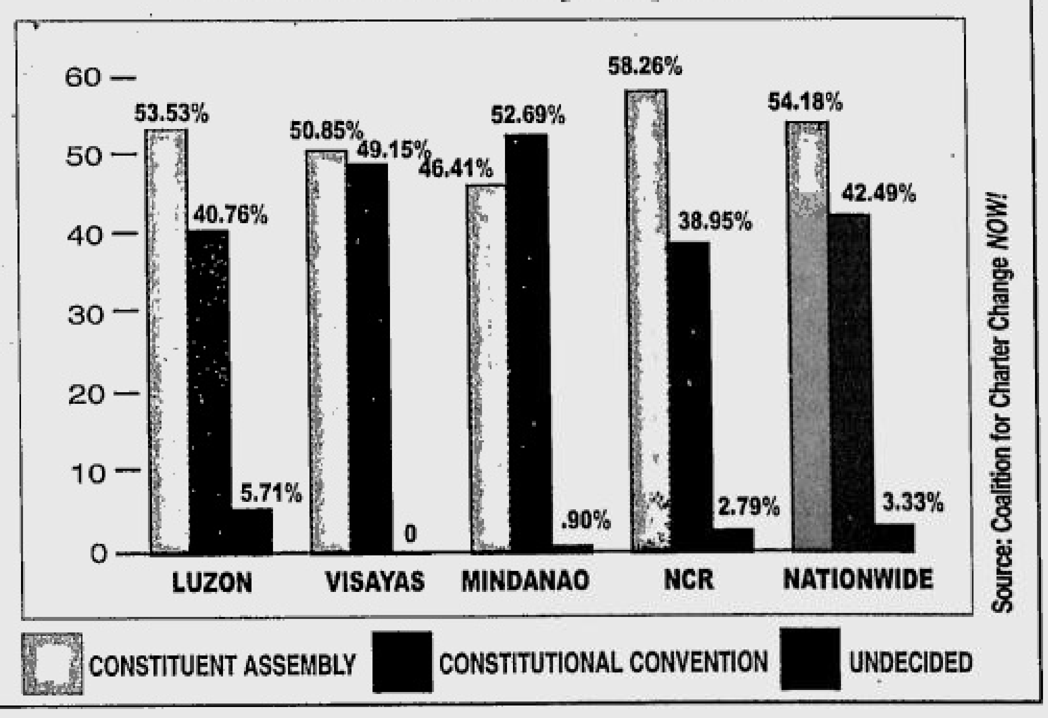
Public opinion favors charter change *NOW* via a Constituent Assembly!

Are you in favor of making some changes in the Constitution?



Source: Coalition for Charter Change *NOW!*

If in favor, what process of amendment do you prefer?



Source: Coalition for Charter Change *NOW!*

A growing and increasingly clear national consensus on amending the 1987 Constitution through a Constituent Assembly has emerged.

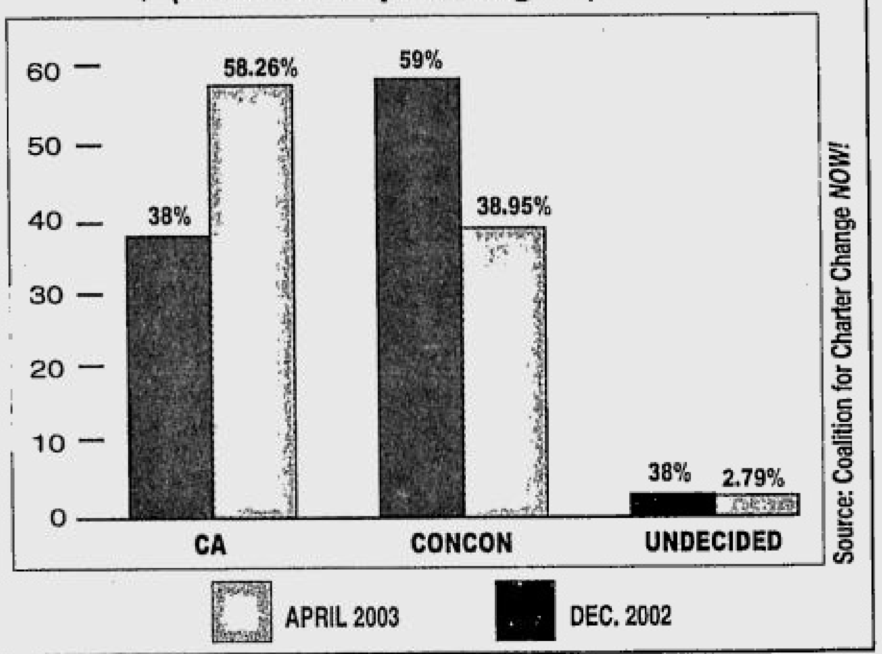
Nationwide, nearly four out of every five voters now agree that some changes in the Constitution should be made.

And of the majority that favors charter change, 54.18% prefer that the amendments be made through a Constituent Assembly of the Senate and the House of Representatives, instead of a Constitutional Convention.

These findings sum up a survey of national opinion commissioned by the 'Coalition for Charter Change Now!' and completed on April 8.

We challenge the other survey organizations to do the same and make public their results.

If in favor, what process of amendment do you prefer?
(National Capital Region)



Source: Coalition for Charter Change *NOW!*

Survey validates our stand on charter change

The survey validates our position on the issue of charter change.

Charter change has become necessary because the *inefficiency* and *inflexibility* of the present political system have begun to affect people's *daily* lives.

Twice in the last 17 years, citizens have had to intervene in the political process through Edsa 1 and Edsa 2 to replace oppressive and corrupt leaders—risking constitutional crisis and even civil conflict.

In our age of economic interdependence, *protectionist* provisions that *date back* to the Commonwealth period—by choking the flow of foreign capital, technology, and production skills into our economy—have made our country the *poorest* among all the *comparable* economies in East Asia, with minimal foreign investments.

And political parties formed around *populist* personalities, *instead* of *coherent* programs of government, have made *sheer popularity*—and *not intelligence*, *competence*, and *experience*—the *best* qualifications for public office.

We need a change of political system, not just a change of leaders. The basic change we seek is a shift from the presidential to a unicameral parliamentary government with a fixed 10-year transition period to a Federal System. And we seek the removal of the protectionist economic provisions from the 1987 Charter.

Indeed, the overwhelming majority of governments in Europe and Asia, the successful democracies including the newest democracies in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, have chosen parliamentary, not presidential government.

Our people cannot afford to wait

The only questions that still remain are those of *how* and *when*.

An influential minority proposes calling a Constitutional Convention in May 2004—in time with the next presidential election.

Not only would such a Convention cost us *eight billion* pesos in money we don't even have. What is worse is that its key amendments will *not even* take effect *until* the *end* of the *next* presidential cycle—in June *2010*.

Those who say constitutional change *can wait* until then *deny* the *urgency* of our country's *need* for a *new beginning*.

Our people now see not only individual leaders—but the political structure itself—as responsible for the way we have fallen behind most of our neighbors in the world's fastest-growing region.

And this loss of faith has resulted in a lack of confidence in this country's future.

Already more than seven million of our people have exiled themselves in 120 countries seeking jobs—and many more vote with their feet every day.

We must assure our youth that there is *hope* for this country.

A Constituent Assembly can do the work quickly

This is why we say the times call for charter change—*now*—and that a Constituent Assembly can have the necessary amendments *operative* by the time the next general elections are due in 2004.

What is more, a Constituent Assembly can make do using only the funds normally allocated to Congress.

Even more important, the Joint Congress Resolution, already approved overwhelmingly by the House, calling for a Constituent Assembly can specify—and limit—the areas of revision the Constituent Assembly may be allowed to make.

This will safeguard the 1987 Charter from any partisan or self-interested tinkering.

No such restraint may be imposed on a Constitutional Convention.

By the way, our 1935, 1972, and 1986 Charters all list the Constituent Assembly as the *first*—and implicitly the *preferred*—method of constitutional revision.

So do many other countries. The United States, for one, has amended its Constitution almost 30 times—and all by Constituent Assembly, never by Constitutional Convention.

We appeal to the Senate to act now

We who are for charter change now have *not* stinted in laying our case before our people.

But we have yet to hear a *reasoned* reply from those who oppose charter change now.

We appeal to the Senate to ACT NOW, unselfishly, on the Joint Resolution—and vote for a Constituent Assembly.

Our duty together is to see that a new Charter is written—*NOW!*

Coalition for Charter Change *Now!*

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Advt.

EMPLOYEES at the Tan Tock Seng hospital in Singapore are fitted for masks that offer protection against the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) virus. There are nearly 200 cases of SARS confirmed in Singapore and 18 deaths attributed to the pneumonia-like illness in the city state.

GETTY IMAGES

Life goes on in SARS-affected Singapore

SINGAPORE—At the Bedok Swimming Complex, a sign at the entrance reminds swimmers to register their names, identity card numbers, contact details and time of visit before they purchase their tickets.

Lifeguards and pool assistants keep a watchful eye out for people who seemed unwell.

Cleaners armed with mops and disinfectant clean the premises three times a day. The pool water is tested even more often—five times a day—to make sure that its chlorine and pH levels comply with standards set by the National Environment Agency.

Water samples are also sent to an external laboratory twice a month to be analyzed and checked for bacteria.

These are a few of the hundreds if not thousands of measures that have been put in place all over Singapore since the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) broke out more than a month ago.

And a few of the hundreds and thousands of ways that life has changed, both subtly and obviously.

Jemangin Salikin, 55, was reading a novel, Mercy Rule, in the shade.

He used to swim almost every day, says the retiree who lives in Chai Chee, several bus-stops away. And then SARS hit.

"I stopped because I didn't feel good (being in crowded places)." So he stayed home and listened to the news, which brought scant comfort. SARS was a menace with an unfamiliar face.

Last week however, he decided that the Government's strategy for dealing with the disease appeared to be sensible. Life had to go on. So back to the pool he went.

This change of heart—initial withdrawal from social contact, followed by the realization that life can go on—has been mirrored all over the island.

Although the outbreak here may not look like it is abating, people are beginning to realize that they can take certain precautions, and avoid certain hot spots. They do have some control over their lives.

So last weekend saw people venturing to sales in Orchard Road and going to movies, all the little things which gave life pleasure before.

Businessman Bryan Teo also decided that his life could not wait for SARS to come to an end. The latter might never happen.

Teo and his wife, who met five years ago, had planned for their big day for a year and were not about to let SARS stop them. Or rather, other people's fear of the disease.

The couple tied the knot yesterday morning, and followed it with a reception, and a dinner for 300 guests at the Grand Hyatt.

Despite reservations on both sides of the family, the couple were resolute. Says Teo, 28, a Malaysian who stayed on to work in Singapore after studying here: "Even if only a handful of people agreed to attend our wedding ceremony, we would still have gone ahead because it's really between the two of us." *The Straits Times/Asia News Network*

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ANTI-SARS MEASURES

Media, churches act to prevent spread

A CABLE television channel in Pampanga is doing its bit to help raise the awareness of communities on Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). A church leader also in Pampanga has urged his members not to kiss babies and children, while a priest in Laguna has done "communion by the hand" during Masses to prevent spread of the SARS virus.

These are only some of the measures being taken at the community level and in the churches to help prevent misinformation and the further transmission of the dreaded virus.

For two weeks since mid-April, Infomax (Channel 8 on the Satellite Cable Network) has been airing the program "Bantay SARS sa Pampanga." It is aired every two hours during the primetime slots on weekends and complemented by flash reports on weekdays.

Maureen Aquino, Infomax general manager, said the one-hour program collects and disseminates information on how residents can best prevent its spread and how the SARS problem is shaping in the province.

Lanie Ontong, a reporter in charge of the program, said their program "puts premium on local information." One of its regular segments is monitoring of government and private hospitals, especially the Jose B. Lingad Memorial Regional Hospital, one of the two quarantine centers of the Department of Health in Central Luzon.

Segments

Another segment keeps tab of returning overseas Filipino workers. After Metro Manila and Southern Luzon, Central Luzon is the third biggest region with OFW population.

Aquino said Infomax had received text messages from residents reporting or inquiring on the SARS situation in Pampanga. But she said they also received text messages giving out false information.

Local DOH officials, on the other hand, were exploring ways to deliver SARS-related information on time to the public.

At the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, Board Member Lilia Pineda, health committee chair, said barangay health workers have not been adequately informed on the SARS problem.

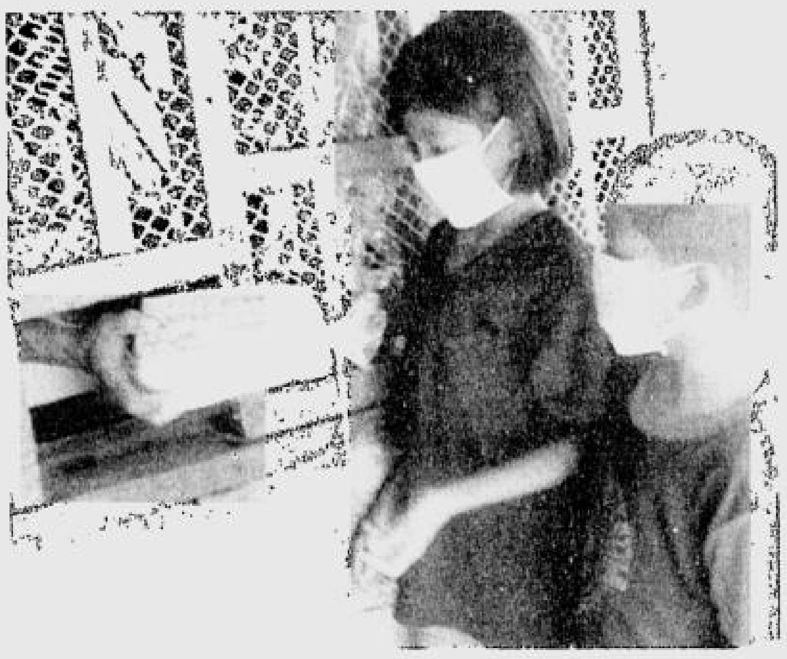
Infomax has also linked up with the cable networks ProSat, Sattlink and the ACCTN to give "Bantay SARS sa Pampanga" a wider exposure to viewers.

Dr. Ethelyn Nieto, DOH Central Luzon director, said the project is "novel" because it is only now that a local cable television is being used in the province to inform the public about a health menace.

"Sharing information is one of the best preventive measures we can take to fight the disease and protect people's health," she said in Filipino.

At the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo on Saturday assured the public that the government was doing all necessary méasures to contain SARS.

Romulo, who inaugurated the modern Subic Bay Medical Center, said the government is taking the issue of SARS "seriously and accurately."



SOME children of Barangay Vacara, Alcala, Pangasinan wear masks when going out of their homes. TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

In Olongapo City, Bladimir Perez, minister of Metro Olongapo Christian Church (MOCC), advised his fellow "believers in Christ" to remain vigilant as far as containing the killer pneumonia was concerned.

No kissing

"To protect our children and prevent the spread of the disease, let us avoid kissing the babies in our church," Perez said.

He said his instruction was made with "good intentions" and did not necessarily prevent the members from getting close to the children who, he noted, are prone to catching the virus because of their weaker immune system.

"You can still hold and carry the babies, but please do not kiss them. It's time for all of us to take the issue of SARS seriously," Perez told his members.

"The best thing to do is to be very careful. No one can tell if there would be a cure for this killer disease in the future," he added.

Some members of MOCC considered the spread of SARS in various countries as a "plague" that no one could escape from.

"Let us treat SARS as a wake-up call. It is during this crisis that people should be praying hard because no one knows who can be the next victim," an MOCC member said.

MOCC is a non-sectarian church affiliated with the International Churches of Christ. It has 150 members in the city.

A priest in the Our Lady's Nativity Parish in Pangil, Laguna said he has started giving "communion by the hand."

"An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure," the priest said, explaining to churchgoers the urgency of such precautions to protect their loved ones and fellow townsfolk.

The parishioners were also told to present themselves to any physician for medical attention if one notices some signs indicative of the killer pneumonia.

"There is no reason to panic. Let us not imitate China who made secret the spread of the disease for sometime until the malady became out of control," the priest reminded the faithful.

SARS budget

In Naga City, council members have prepared a budget to fight SARS even if the health department in the Bicol region has dismissed as plain rumor the reported death of a returning overseas Filipino worker from Macau to Baao, Camarines Sur.

City health officer Dr. Vito Borja II said the city is "now ready for SARS." He said the City Health Office has already purchased 500 pieces of the standard N19 surgical masks to be used by around 250 barangay health workers and scholars, midwives and volunteers "who are on the first line of contact with suspected SARS carriers."

He said thousands more will be purchased soon, which would also include caps, gloves and gowns.

Daily orientation of all health workers are also conducted by the City Health Office, said Borja.

He said the city has already closely coordinated with the Bicol Medical Center (BMC), Bicol's regional hospital, under the supervision of DOH-5, to treat SARS patients coming from the city.

According to Borja, the city's hospital cannot accommodate SARS patients because it has no isolation room with complete facilities to treat them.

Baao councilor and health committee chair Miguel Bolalin, however, believed that BMC was not yet ready to handle SARS cases after its nurse allegedly ran away after seeing the ambulance of Baao for fear that it was the rumored SARS victim from their town.

He added that even security guards of the hospital refused entry to the medical staff of Baao.

As a result of the rumors, Bolalin said he will ask Mayor Melquiades Gaite to convene the local health board to monitor returning OFWs from their place who may be suspected to be SARS carriers.

"We will discuss if we can create a monitoring committee so that in case there are again SARS rumors, we can discuss what the local government should do so there will be no confusion when it comes to cases like that," he said.

Earlier, DOH-5 chief epidemiologist Dr. Ferchito Avelino identified the two government hospitals in the region that will treat suspected SARS patients as the BMC and the Bicol Regional Training and Teaching Hospital in Albay.

He also warned other hospitals not to refuse treatment of suspected SARS patients. *Tonette Orejas and Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Romulo Ponte and Alan Pelayo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Boracay residents join protest vs casino plan

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Residents of Boracay Island joined a prayer rally on Saturday to protest the plan to put up a casino on the island resort.

Rev. Isauro David, parish priest of the Holy Rosary Parish, said around 800 residents of the island's three villages joined the rally. The Boracay Special Police Unit, however, placed the crowd at 300.

The protesters assembled at the public plaza of Barangay Balabag before proceeding to the beach near Boat Station 1. The protesters led by various church denominations then marched for three kilometers along the famed white beach to Boat Station 3.

David, also the social action director of the Diocese of Kalibo, said a group of protesters prayed the rosary while those at the front chanted anti-casino slogans. He said the rally was one of the biggest protest rallies held on the island.

"This (protest) is the moral voice of the people that serves as a challenge to government officials especially the Pagcor (Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.)," David told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

The Pagcor is planning to put up a casino at the Club Panoly, a high-end resort in a secluded area in Barangay Yapak, one of three villages comprising the island.

Tourism officials said earnings from casino could help finance development projects on the island.

Tourism regional director Edwin Trompeta downplayed the fears of those opposed to the plan. He said the casino will have limited access because of its secluded location. But he said the plan will only push through if there is social acceptance.

The Diocese of Kalibo has strongly spoken out against the plan because of its perceived immoral effects. The Diocese and the various parish councils have repeatedly written to President Macapagal-Arroyo to shelve the plan.

The Aklan provincial government passed a resolution signed by majority of its members on Oct. 25 last year against the casino.

David said several resort owners also joined Saturday's rally.

3 Batangas students denied graduation

By Mei Magsino
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

BATANGAS CITY—Graduating Agriculture Business Management student Sheilla Trivino, 22, woke up as early as 4 a.m. last Thursday to face her life's biggest day, her graduation day.

She didn't even take breakfast, as she was afraid she might be late in the graduation ceremony held at the Batangas State University (BSU).

Trivino lives in San Juan town, 45 kilometers northeast of this city, where BSU has a satellite campus, the BSU-San Juan campus where she studied Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Business Management, a four-year degree course.

She took a one-hour bus ride to get to this city where the main campus is located and where the graduation rites were held.

Dressed in her best outfit, she donned her cap and gown. She was ready to graduate.

But when the names of the graduates were called, her name was not mentioned, along with her thesismates, Mildred Javier and Isidro Villanueva, a candidate for cum laude.

Unfair and unjust

"Our names were included in the graduation list, but we were not called," Trivino said. "That is very unfair and unjust, because we have been evaluated and our clearances have been approved. We even paid the P950 graduation fee."

Trivino has no failing grades, the major reason for a student not to graduate.

Her only problem, she said, was that their thesis, titled "Integrated Crop Management of Pechay at BSU San Juan campus," lacked the signature of university president Ernesto De Chavez and the vice president for extension campuses, Porfirio Ligaya.

"But I've been going to their offices everyday since the day after we defended our thesis on March 15, but they never signed our thesis," Trivino said.

The signatures of the two officers were not a requirement in past thesis defenses.

This year, it was made a requirement for Trivino's group thesis.

"This is a form of harassment for me because I facilitated the people's forum in San Juan on Dec. 2 last year. That forum discussed the excessive tuition and miscellaneous fees imposed by BSU on us, students," Trivino said.

The video documentary of that people's forum was shown in a congressional hearing on Feb. 5 where the graft and corruption charges against the university president were heard.

In that forum, Trivino exposed the exorbitant graduation fee she paid two years ago when she graduated from the same course in her second year.

In this university, college students under ladderized or vocational courses graduate every year. And they have to pay the graduation fee each year.

Blacklisted

"I think the BSU officials who saw that video marked me as a blacklisted student and would do everything to keep me from graduating," she said. "What I did was just to tell the truth, which is my right. I exercised my freedom of speech in the hope that the other students would have the courage to fight for their right to an uncorrupted education."

But even if her name was not called, Trivino still went up the stage and joined the graduation march.

Onstage, she showed Ligaya her copy of the graduation invitation that had her name, and her two groupmates' names printed.

But Ligaya shunned her away, onstage.

When Trivino went down from the stage, she took off her graduation cap and gown and walked out of the crowded auditorium, where the rest of her graduating class started singing the graduation song.

"The fight is not yet over," Trivino said. "I'm going to my lawyer."

According to Ligaya, Trivino's thesis group was not allowed to graduate because they failed to complete their thesis requirements.

"And their names were included in the graduation list because of the printer's error," Ligaya said.

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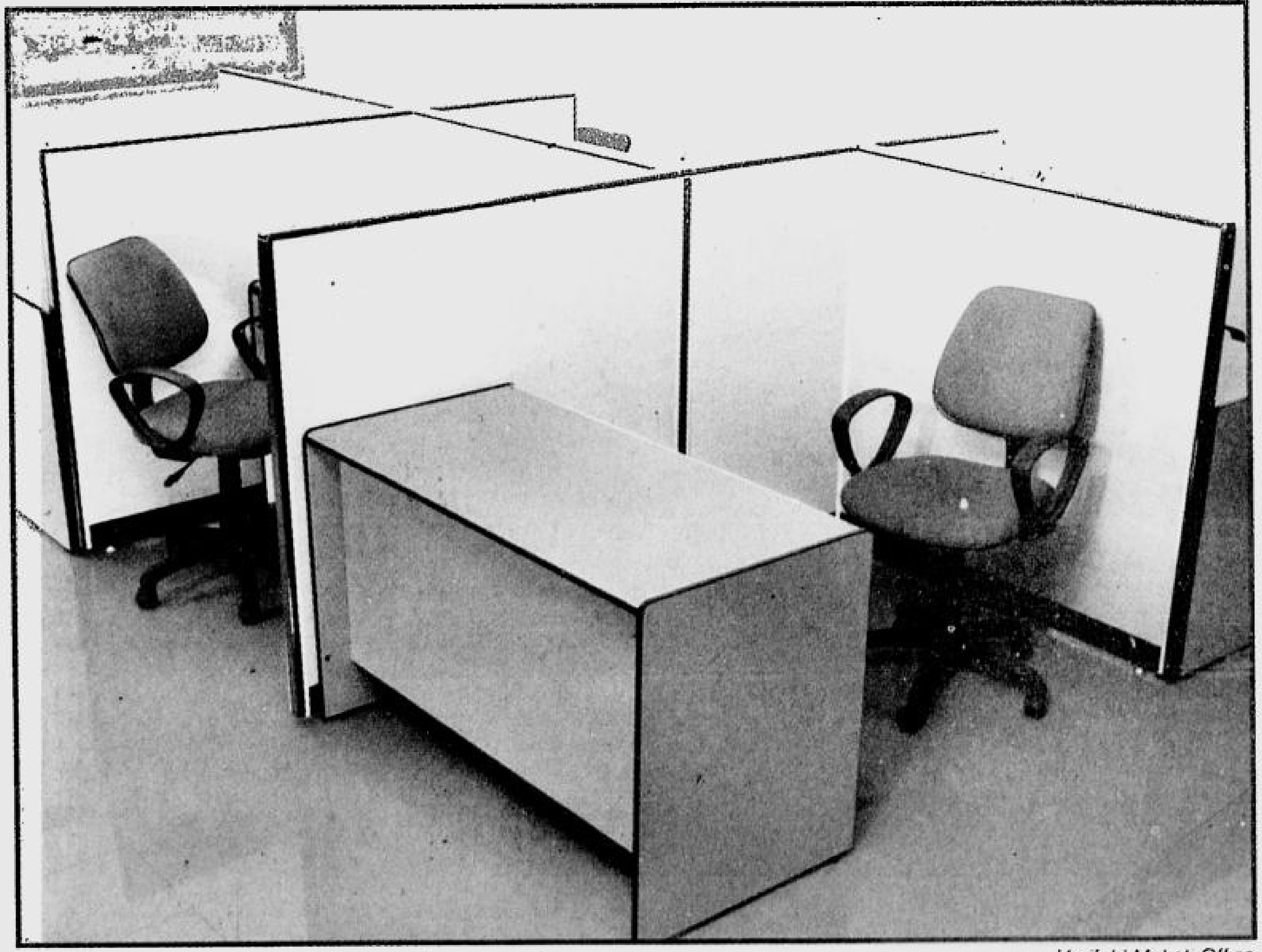

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Julie's LEADERS for the FUTURE AWARD 2003

I greet the men and women of Julie's Bakeshop, most especially this year's Julie's Bakeshop Leaders for the Future Awardees.

The underlying goal of this award to recognize the achievements of distinguished elementary graduates is truly relevant for a generation that composes the majority of our population.

As the future leaders and builders of our nation, it is necessary that all sectors and institutions of society take part in inculcating the importance of excellence, nationalism, discipline and industry to the youth.

We, thus, welcome this initiative as an effective means to stress these golden virtues that should shape the consciousness and personality of today's youth. I congratulate Julie's Bakeshop for this laudable undertaking and may you remain a partner in youth development.

Mabuhay!

GMArroyo

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
President of the Republic of the Philippines

Julie's Bakeshop gives commendation to this year's outstanding elementary graduates who have shown excellent academic abilities and demonstrated exemplary leadership skills through the "Leaders For the Future Award 2003"

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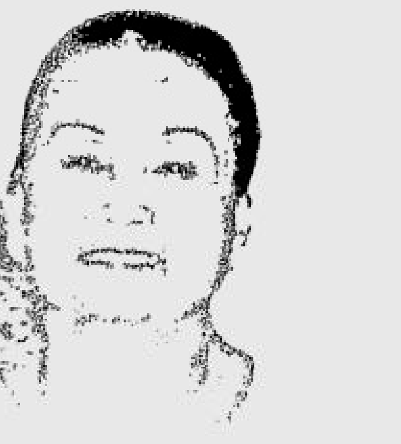
My dear graduates and honor students, you have reached a milestone in your life where you march up to receive the fruitful rewards of year's toils. Let this be just a step that will mold you to become productive citizens of our society.

Your parents will continue to nurture, guide, and provide you with the support and inspiration you need to become better individuals. Maybe even not just as individuals but as future leaders of our country as well.

The power to move and change the future is in your hands, dear graduates . . . Let this power go unwasted . . .

Julie R. Gandionco

Julie R. Gandionco,
Founder, Julie's Bakeshop



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Beijing closes bars, theaters ...

From page A1

cial Xinhua New Agency reported. The measure was announced just days after the city shut down schools, sending home 1.7 million students.

Eight of the nine new SARS deaths were in Beijing and the city also accounted for 126 out of 161 newly reported cases, according to health ministry spokesperson Deng Haihua. The new deaths pushed the Chinese mainland's death toll to 131 with almost 3,000 people sickened across the country.

The entertainment shutdown came amid increasingly drastic official steps to contain SARS, including the quarantine of thousands of people this past week in Beijing and the sealing off of at least three hospitals because of SARS infections.

"Cultural and entertainment spaces are temporarily closed for business beginning today," said a sign posted on the door of a movie theater in the city's eastern district. "Thank you for your understanding," it added.

Isolation camp

With Beijing's cases showing no sign of ebbing, hundreds of construction workers were working around-the-clock on a new 1,000-bed isolation camp for SARS victims in the rural district of Xiaotangshan on Beijing's northern outskirts.

Workers were assembling plastic and metal panels into a honey comb of one-story rooms on a large field beside an abandoned factory, about a kilometer from the town.

Other new anti-SARS measures included raising the maximum fine for spitting in public—thought to be a means of SARS transmission—by 1,000 percent to 50 yuan (US$6) and the suspension of registration of marriages between foreigners and Chinese.

Officials have also cut short the upcoming week-long May Day vacation in an attempt to keep tens of millions of Chinese from traveling and possibly spreading the virus. Even so, Beijing's airport and train stations have been jammed with migrant workers, college students and expatriates fleeing the capital.

The length of the closures of entertainment venues, including discos and karaoke parlors, will depend on progress made in combating SARS, which has killed at least 42 people and sickened 988 in Beijing, Xinhua said.

Public libraries also have been closed but will reopen on May 8, it said.

Beijing's entertainment businesses have already suffered massive losses as nervous residents shun public places for fear of catching the virus.

Restaurants and shopping centers remained open on Sunday, although customers were few. Public parks, Tiananmen Square, and historical sites such as the Forbidden City—the sprawling former home of China's emperors—were mostly empty because of a ban on Chinese tour groups traveling outside their home provinces.

Stores selling movies and TV shows on DVDs did a roaring business as city dwellers opted to stay home.

The communist government has been widely criticized for failing to respond earlier to pleas for action. On Saturday, however, China replaced the health minister after he was blamed for not taking effective action on SARS. New Health Minister Wu Yi, also a vice premier, is a respected former trade envoy and already was the top official in charge of health care.

Beijing's mayor also was replaced last week after a senior party official blamed him for failings cited by World Health Organization investigators, which included not tracing people exposed to those infected with SARS.

The WHO has advised against nonessential travel to China and Hong Kong, where SARS has sickened 1,543 people and killed 133.

The 12 deaths, which was reported by Hong Kong on Sunday, included seven people who had been suffering from other chronic illnesses. Of the four who were not, three were aged between 77 and 91. The other victim was a 56-year-old man with no history of bad diseases.

Asean summit

The summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and China is likely to produce a message of unity pitched primarily at investors, as fears of SARS soar with the relentless daily death tolls from China and Hong Kong.

"They will enumerate the measures they have taken, while trying to sell the idea that the situation has stabilized," one Bangkok-based Western diplomat said. "The basic idea they will present is: agreeing the epidemic has not been eradicated, but has been reduced, and saying, we have taken firm and effective measures to contain it, therefore it is not necessary to reduce investment." *Reports from AP and AFP*

SARS BRIEFS

Taiwan reports first death

TAIPEI, Taiwan—Taiwan's government announced Sunday the island's first SARS death and imposed a 10-day mandatory quarantine on all people arriving from areas hit hard by the flu-like disease. The 56-year-old man who died Saturday night contracted SARS after his brother visited him. The brother was diagnosed with SARS after returning to Hong Kong weeks ago. Starting immediately, foreigners arriving in Taiwan from countries and places hit hard by SARS will be quarantined for 10 days at government-designated quarters yet to be announced, while Taiwan residents will have to stay at home, Premier Yu Shyi-kun said. ***AP***

SARS case in Calcutta

CALCUTTA, India—India reported Sunday its sixth case of SARS in the crowded eastern city of Calcutta. A 42-year-old man, who recently returned from a business trip to China, tested positive for the flu-like disease and was placed in isolation in a hospital in Calcutta. Health authorities in West Bengal have also quarantined the patient's family at their home in a Calcutta suburb. Some doctors in India have complained that authorities were treating SARS too casually and warned the disease could spread swiftly among the country's more than 1 billion people, most of whom have inadequate health care. ***AP***

Massive disinfecting drive

SINGAPORE—Singapore will close dozens of food centers and markets on Monday in a massive disinfecting exercise to prevent the spread of SARS. The National Environmental Agency said in a statement that at least 80 centers would be closed for the clean-up and that all 134 food centers in the city-state would be cleaned by the following Monday. The agency said there was no danger of environmental transmission, but it said the cleanup was "essential to improve personal and environmental standards to minimize the risk of transmission." ***AP***

Malaysia quarantines 280

KUALA LUMPUR—The Malaysian government on Sunday ordered more than 280 workers and patients at a psychiatric hospital to be quarantined, after three patients showed suspected SARS symptoms. Deputy Health Director General Ismail Merican said concerns surfaced at a hospital in Kuching, the capital city of eastern Sarawak state on Borneo island, after three patients developed high fevers and other pneumonia-like symptoms earlier this month. Two people have died and four others have been infected in Malaysia. There have been no known probable SARS cases in Sarawak. ***AP***

China medics honored

BEIJING—Chinese medical workers who died of SARS have been posthumously honored as "Guardians of the People's Health" as part of a national morale-boosting campaign. The first three recipients—a doctor, head nurse and driver in the hardest-hit province of Guangdong—caught SARS while helping patients. "The broad masses of medical workers have struggled in unity and determination in the battle against SARS, producing many moving tales and heroes of great stature. These three comrades are their outstanding examples," said a health ministry notice published Sunday. ***AP***

Travel ban reviewed

TORONTO—As Toronto recorded its 20th death in its battle against SARS on Saturday, the World Health Organization said it may consider dropping its bitterly contested travel advisory against Canada's biggest city. WHO spokesperson Dick Thompson said the organization would review Canada's handling of the flu-like virus tomorrow and make a decision on lifting the order that was to last three weeks. The WHO announced on Wednesday that travelers should avoid Toronto, along with Beijing, Hong Kong and China's Shanxi and Guangdong provinces. Toronto began to woo back tourists on Saturday with a multilingual television campaign. ***AP***

E-mail rumors in HK

HONG KONG—Police said Sunday they were investigating an e-mail hoax that claimed the SARS virus had been found in the air filters of the territory's subway trains that carry millions of passengers a day. "The allegation is absolutely without foundation," Mass Transit Rail Corp. operation director Phil Gaffney said in a statement. Using the web page design of a popular local newspaper, a 14-year-old boy allegedly created a fake story on April 1 that declared Hong Kong an "infected area." Police arrested the boy and the government quashed the rumor by sending out an unprecedented text message to all 6 million cell phones here, in addition to making statements to the news media. ***AP***

Survey shows GMA not winning battle of perception

From page A1

Iraq could help reverse her sagging popularity remains unanswered.

There is nothing that this administration can do to stop the scourge of SARS from spreading; the virus, like the plagues of the Middle Ages, will lose steam only of its own accord, but its impact is likely to shrink economic growth.

What should be pointed out is that foreign policy has insignificant impact on the political fortunes of this administration and economic gains are easily eroded by external events like the Iraqi conflict and SARS. Therefore, the end of the SARS outbreak and the return to normality in Iraq are not likely to improve the public opinion rating of the Macapagal administration.

GDP growth

During the past year, the GDP growth surpassed the most optimistic expectation of the administration and caught international financial institutions by surprise.

Even while growth was taking place, partly due to competence in economic management, the administration's poll rating continued to sag, contrary to the trend of economic expansion.

This means that the Filipino public either does not appreciate the administration's economic management and is not giving it due recognition, or there is something more than the economy that is eroding the President's popularity.

According to conventional wisdom, a buoyant economy lifts popularity ratings, but in the case of the Macapagal administration, its rather reasonable economic performance is not helping its popularity at all.

So the President must begin an anxious soul-searching again, to discover why, no matter what she does, she is losing, rather than gaining, the confidence and support of the nation.

Four months after her announcement to quit, the nation has not moved forward very much. The bulk of Ms Macapagal's key legislative programs in her priority agenda is still trapped in stalemate.

The stalemate on legislative initiatives and the slow pace of implementation of programs in the executive department are symptoms of a leadership that cannot get things done in an atmosphere of urgency.

When she announced her retirement from politics, she had hoped that by putting her presidency above the poisonous and acrimonious atmosphere of partisan politics, her decision would end the deep political divisions and galvanize the nation behind the renewal program of a non-political presidency.

But these expectations have not materialized. Key economic projects are not moving as fast as the administration wants. The bureaucracy is like a deeply embedded rock that cannot be dislodged.

The administration has a project monitoring mechanism, but the results of the projects are too embarrassing for the government to project to the public.

Exhaustion

The presidency is showing signs of exhaustion even before it could release a dynamism to shake the nation out of its listlessness. Ms Macapagal's flaws in getting the right people to serve in the Cabinet and even in her advisory group are getting more attention, as new Cabinet appointees leave (for example, Press Secretary Hernani Braganza) before they could even warm their seats.

In the choice of her advisers, she has not shown any better judgment. She has parted ways with her formerly close private "publicist," Dante Ang. Ironically, she had not needed extra-official media advisers outside her own press secretary to give luster to her administration.

But it seems to me that the key to her sagging popularity is not economic performance or the show of strong leadership through public explosions of a short fuse. The explanation lies in the failure of the President to gain broad public confidence and trust in her administration. Her competence, intelligence and grasp of problems, especially about the economy, are beyond dispute. But the public and the political sector are holding back full support.

True, she took office in the midst of political chaos and economic difficulties and the legitimacy of her accession to the presidency—through people power rather than an electoral mandate—has been challenged. But a gifted political leadership could have overcome these obstacles. The previous Lakas president, Fidel Ramos, cobbled a consensus despite the fact that he won only 24 percent of the vote.

Weakened office

Ms Macapagal's withdrawal from politics is obviously not the answer to mobilize the nation and move it forward. It has, on the contrary, weakened her presidency rather than tap the reserve powers of the presidency to push her reform agenda.

Lurking underneath the weak presidency, which cannot be covered up by slogans of a "strong Republic," is the widespread perception that the President has lost the moral high ground for leadership to inspire the public to close ranks behind her.

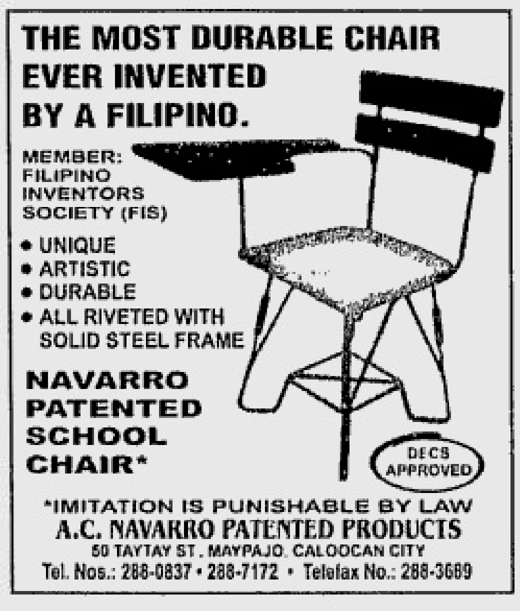
This perception is based not so much on evidence of corruption by those close to her but on the willingness of the public and of her opponents to believe rumors of wrongdoing.

In a court of law, evidence is required to prove wrongdoing, but the court of public opinion has a different basis for forming political conclusions.

The President is not winning in the battle of perception. The public opinion polls reflect this.

Perception is what the public likes to believe in. The belief is even spreading that the main reason the President quit politics is that seeking a full term would open the floodgates of scandals that could only damage an election campaign.

The mood now is demoralizing; it's one of wait and see. The public is waiting for change in May 2004. In the meantime, things move slowly.



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Divers caught spearfishing in Apo Reef

From page A1

April 19, was signed by the group's dive master and instructor Gilda Ma. "Gigi" Y. Santos, Oceanic Explorer owner Juan Wee, dive instructor Toni Efune, and divers Cristina Uy, George Uy-Tioco, Patrick Uy-Tioco, Richard Ang, Eduardo Rocha Jr., Tim Duckworth, Krisitina Plinski, Jamby Madrigal and Eric Valade.

Patrick Uy-Tioco wrote an account of the events, which he sent to the office of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Philippines.

One of the divers seen and identified as spearfishing at the Apo Menor inside the marine park was businessman Tony Ang, owner of Tiara II. The videographer was identified as Hernel Castillo, a dive instructor and Filipino course director of the Professional Association of Dive Instructors (Padi), one of the world's biggest scuba-diving certification organizations.

The Oceanic Explorer group was diving at the Apo Menor at around 9 a.m. of April 19, according to the complaint.

Members of the group were doing their safety stop and ending their dive when they saw three divers holding spear guns and someone with a video camera beneath them.

Dead grouper

One of the spearfishers had a dead grouper attached to his air tank and was aiming at a large marble ray. Another diver had a lobster in a bag.

After the first dive group surfaced, the spearfishers, apparently distracted by the presence of other divers, eventually surfaced and got on their red chase boat. The complainants witnessed the divers and their catch being transported back to Tiara II.

A photograph of two of the divers with the dead grouper, one of them sporting twin tanks, was taken by Toni Efune while snorkeling after the dive, using a still camera owned by Gigi Santos.

The spearfishers were acting in apparent violation of environmental laws. The Apo Reef, which falls under the jurisdiction of the municipality of Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro, was named a marine park through Presidential Proclamation No. 1801 in 1980. It was declared a protected area under the category of "natural park" by President Fidel Ramos through Proclamation No. 868 on Sept. 6, 1996.

"It is also one of the 10 priority sites of the National Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas), under the Conservation of Priority Protected Areas Project of the DENR," says Ajit Rye, Conservation Standards Desk Officer of WWF-Philippines.

The Apo Reef Natural Park covers a total area of 24,469 hectares, divided into 29 ha of land and 15,763 ha of water. Surrounding the park is an 11,677-ha buffer zone.

The park is also divided into several "use" zones, including the 33.72-ha "strict protection zone," the area of greatest control that covers Apo Island, Apo Menor and the surrounding waters, according to Rye.

"A strict protection zone is closed to all human activity except scientific study and ceremonial or religious use," Rye says.

While recreational diving is generally allowed on board registered dive boats, the "no-take" policy makes spearfishing and any other kind of fishing activity illegal.

"All this information is available in a visitors' kit that is given by the DENR to all registered boats, so I'm sure the Tiara II has a copy," adds Rye.

The Tiara II, which is ironically a registered Auxiliary Coast Guard vessel with No. PCG AUX 101332, apparently has a history of visiting the Apo Reef for the wrong reasons. The complaint sent to the WWF by Uy-Tioco was the third recorded against the boat by the environmental organization.

Gunshots

In August 2002, park rangers of the DENR reported in writing of gunshots being fired from the vessel around the Apo Reef. The reef is also home to an endangered species of Nicobar pigeon, says Rye, so such noise disturbs the land animals, as well.

In February, George Wegman, a Boracay-based dive instructor and boat owner, also reported spotting spearfishers on board the Tiara II in the Apo Reef. Rye told the INQUIRER that the WWF had been in touch with the boat owner, Ang, and had explained to him why such practices were not allowed.

Leodovico Mamuntos, supervisor of the Apo Reef Protected Area, has informed the WWF that his group, with the support of the Philippine National Police, would apprehend the Tiara II should it be spotted violating the law in the area again.

Mamuntos said his group would also file a case against the passengers of the vessel with the Regional Trial Court in San Jose, Mindoro, according to Rye.

"It's disgusting," says complainant Santos, a Padi master scuba diver trainer, who has been visiting the Apo Reef regularly since 1984.

Santos echoes the sentiments of many divers who feel that endangering the Apo Reef for kicks, or so that affluent sportsmen can catch a few delicacies, is many times more grave an offense than if, say, a subsistence fisherman had been caught.

Divers, in fact, are encouraged to respect the underwater environment by taking nothing and leaving nothing. Padi even has a worldwide effort, Project Aware, to encourage environmental concern.

"Those guys told us what they're doing should be OK, because they eat what they catch, anyway," Santos says. "That's not the point. The point is, Apo Reef is a restricted area. The diving has become so different now from what it used to be; there are less fish and they're afraid of people. I think that's directly related to spearfishing."

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'National emergency' on SARS

From page A1

tary Manuel Dayrit, whom she appointed as SARS czar, the power to call on the police and the military to help contain the spread of SARS.

Dayrit can authorize the examination of incoming and outgoing ships and aircraft and the isolation and quarantine of cargoes, passengers and crew members.

He can also order the closure of schools, suspend classes and set up checkpoints and curtail movements of people in the communities.

Because of the national emergency, local government units can draw from their calamity funds to hire more health workers like in the aftermath of typhoons and other natural calamities, according to Bunye.

Based on existing procedures, the LGUs can also use their calamity funds to provide relief goods to affected communities for the first three days, after which the national government will step in.

When sought for clarification late yesterday afternoon about what he meant by "national emergency," Bunye declined to answer a call and a text message placed on his mobile phone. When his number was dialed once more, Bunye's mobile phone was already turned off.

While SARS-hit countries have adopted draconian measures, the comments of Ms Macapagal and Bunye are likely to raise eyebrows among human rights advocates.

Under the Constitution, only Congress may declare a state of national emergency, especially in times of war, and grant extraordinary powers to the President for a limited period of time.

Various legal quarters say a state of national emergency is tantamount to a declaration of martial law—similar to what then President Ferdinand Marcos resorted to in 1972.

In an official statement released by Malacañang, Bunye also used the term "national emergency."

The statement's first paragraph read: "Malacañang today enjoined businessmen to help the government cope with the national emergency spawned by the fact that the country is no longer free of the dreaded Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome."

A militant group yesterday lashed out at the Macapagal administration for exploiting the hysteria to legitimize "martial law-like" measures to combat the disease. The group said the government should instead provide the health sector with more funds.

"The government is exploiting the global hysteria created by SARS to legitimize the use of police powers and pave the way for creeping martial law in de facto style under the pretext of protecting public health," Fernando Hicap, chair of the Pamalakaya, said in a statement.

Pamalakaya said the powers given to the SARS crisis committee, headed by Dayrit, were not only "an overkill but also unnecessary."

"It will possibly create larger issues of human rights violations both in the cities and rural areas," Hicap said.

Underscoring widespread concern over SARS, Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin has urged the Catholic faithful in the country to receive communion hosts by hand instead of a priest placing them directly in the mouth, and discouraged people from the common practice of kissing religious icons.

At an old Manila church, cardboard signs announced the choices on hosts, with many heeding Sin's appeal and lining up for "communion by hand." A few were defiant, saying God would take care of them.

Tomorrow, the President will leave for Bangkok to join nine other leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in an emergency summit aimed at curbing the spread of SARS. ***With reports from Philip C. Tubeza, Lourdes Valerie B. Handumon in Manila; Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; and AP***

Rudy Guevarra. Pandacan. Barangay 834. Zone 91

Of the places to call home, Pandacan was the natural choice.

Rudy Guevarra was born and raised in Pandacan. He could have elected to live in his other residence in Cavite, but chose Pandacan instead. "It's more secure here. And very safe. I know because I used to work at the terminal years ago. I know safety is job number one. Should they move? Well, some people would do anything to stop it." By the way, Rudy is now a Barangay Kagawad and responsible for Peace And Order. "This is home."

CALTEX PETRON

PDI scholar . . .

From page A1

laude or that I am 'historical.' It hasn't sunk in."

"During my first years, I did not have illusions of graduating with honors. I just wanted to finish on time," Tandoc said. "I really did not think about it. It was not a conscious effort to study hard and graduate (summa cum laude)."

Tandoc, who hails from Tayug, Pangasinan, is also the recipient of GMA Channel 7's President's Medal for Journalism.

He had graduated salutatorian in grade school and valedictorian in high school. This time, the 20-year-old is one of only four summa cum laude graduates in the whole UP System.

The two other INQUIRER scholars also graduated with honors. Angeli Alagcan graduated magna cum laude and Monika Tarra Quizmundo, cum laude.

Tandoc's academic record is impressive. Out of the 49 subjects he took in college, he got the top grade of 1 in 27 of them. He had twelve 1.25s and seven 1.5s.

The lowest grade he got was 1.75 in three of his subjects.

His final average: 1.17857143 or 1.18.

Not studious

Tandoc said he wasn't the type to hit the books all the time.

"I am not the studious type. I did not become a summa cum laude because I read hundreds of books," he said.

This was due in part to his course, BA Journalism.

"In journalism, you go out, talk to people, and write about them. It is experienced-based," he said. "When you say you're good, it's not necessarily because you have read lots of books."

"I feel that I graduated summa cum laude because I met lots of people, went to many rallies, and covered many events, and (more importantly) I enjoyed doing all these things," Tandoc said.

"I'm really happy with my course. It was very important that my parents let me choose my own course," he added.

He is the eldest son of Edson Tandoc Sr., 45, and Perlita Castro, 46, both of whom are engineers. He has two brothers and a baby sister.

Tandoc said that even when he was still a "toddler in preschool," his mother was already preparing him for his studies. "She was taking care of me and monitoring my assignments. She always taught me," he said.

"So when I got to Grade 1, it was already normal for me to do my assignments on the night after they were given. It was normal for me to study," Tandoc added.

He said he began to have an interest in writing—and journalism—after a teacher asked him to join an essay-writing contest. After that, he wrote essays on his own even when they were not required, because writing had become his "outlet."

"I wrote on different topics. Like, when I got angry at somebody or some politician, I wrote about it," he said.

UP classmates

On his first day in UP Diliman, the boy from Tayug found himself intimidated by his classmates. "They all spoke English. When they introduced themselves on our first day, they sounded like they were rich and very intelligent," he said.

He eventually became comfortable being with them.

He got "low" grades during his first semester. It was the only semester that he did not get a 1 in any of his subjects.

But he did get an average of 1.45, making him a university scholar—an honor he retained throughout his stay at the university.

Tandoc said he did a lot of cramming during college but, surprisingly, his grades did not suffer.

"I feel that I had a better output when I crammed. This last semester, I did three final papers in a single day and they all passed," he said. He got 1s in all his subjects in his last semester.

He also crammed while studying for his exams, sometimes falling asleep in bed.

"But I don't study everything. Once I get the feeling that I am confident enough to pass the exam, I no longer push ahead. I don't memorize all the pages," Tandoc said.

Tandoc said he also rarely stayed at the Masscom Library or at the UP Main Library.

"My library card for my fourth year was empty. The books I borrowed in the four years I was in college (both from the college and main libraries) did not reach 20. When we got assignments, I just have the assigned pages photocopied. I didn't stay in the library," he said.

He said he did his studying at home.

School org

Tandoc said he spent most of his time in school at the *tambayan* (hangout) of his school organization—the UP Journalism Club. He is also a member of the UP Green Minds, a group of environmentalist journalists.

Tandoc said he and his friends did not dwell on "heavy stuff" but talked only about everyday things, such as what happened in school and about their dream careers.

But they seldom went out to party. Tandoc said in his four years in UP, he did not go to a disco or bar.

"It's important that you enjoy what you are doing because if you are not happy, the outcome will be no good. If your skills are in sports, then pursue it. It does not mean that a summa cum laude is better than a most valuable player. Because an MVP is the best in his field and he is happy with what he does," Tandoc said.

A JAPANESE tourist poses for a souvenir photo with two Igorot tribe elders wearing protective masks against SARS in Baguio City. AFP

Singapore …

From page A1

people in government custody, even if the SARS suspects are merely confined in their homes.

The Singapore government has also sealed off one hospital where all SARS patients are treated.

The INQUIRER learned that several houses and apartment units in Singapore were equipped with government cameras to monitor people in quarantine. Authorities direct residents in quarantine to report periodically to assigned monitors. They are also required to report to designated quarantine officers.

Cameras have also been set up at the borders of the quarantine area, manned by 24-hour security personnel.

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, who chairs the National Disaster Coordinating Council, said Malacañang wanted to ensure that the four confirmed SARS cases in the country would not evolve into "disaster proportions."

Reyes was in Baguio on Saturday as guest during the 58th anniversary rites of Baguio's liberation at the end of World War II.

The defense chief said the government was studying alternative protocols and extreme quarantine rules as the Department of Health assumes prominent authority over the SARS crisis.

"We are studying that matter. We know that if SARS assumes a disaster proportion, we may have to (strengthen quarantine procedures), but we are not there yet," he said.

Info campaign

While the Singapore experience may help the government, it should mount an information and education campaign as "intensive" as the Ramos administration's immunization program in the early 1990s to effectively fight the spread of the SARS virus, Sen. Juan Flavier said.

Flavier, a health secretary of the Ramos administration said the DOH was so far in the "right direction" in instituting preventive and monitoring measures. However, it lacks an "intensive" public health education program.

The DOH, he said, should focus its information and education campaign on SARS on two issues: How to identify SARS symptoms and its preventive measures.

The senator said the campaign should focus for instance on telling the public to wash their hands always, to forego venturing into crowded places like malls, and to take vitamins to strengthen their immune system.

JP improves

In Tacloban City, the country's fourth SARS case might be declared "recovered" by health authorities of Eastern Visayas within 48 hours if her health condition continued to improve.

But Dr. Adelaida Asperin, chief of hospital of the Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center, said JP, who had been in isolation for three days, would remain at the EVRMC even if she was considered "recovered" in order to complete her 14-day isolation period.

Asperin said the government-run hospital would still have to wait for the results of the laboratory examinations conducted on the blood and tissue samples of JP, which were sent to the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) in Muntinlupa, before the hospital could declare whether she was SARS-free.

Results of the tests are expected be out within the next two weeks. JP became ill on April 14, five days after she arrived from Hong Kong where she worked as a domestic helper.

Asperin said JP continued to be free of fever over the last two days. She, however, still suffers from "non-productive cough," or cough without phlegm.

Longer quarantine

In Muntinlupa, Adela's caregiver may be placed under observation for a period longer than required after exhibiting symptoms of SARS. Adela's father Mauricio was also later confirmed to have died of SARS after the Department of Health earlier said his death was caused by cancer.

JC, Adela's caregiver, may not be released with seven other relatives of the Catalons who are quarantined at the RITM, Remigio Olveda, RITM director, said yesterday.

Olveda said JC had suffered from fever for the past three days, a sign that he could be afflicted with the same ailment that killed the Catalons.

Relatives of the Catalons were due to be released on April 26 but the observation period was extended to April 30. Now, Olveda said JC could be isolated even longer if the fever persists. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

'Lechon' also bad for execs' careers

From page A1

the Zamboanga Freeport Authority (the Ecozone) have been charged in the Office of the Mindanao Ombudsman for malversation of public funds and falsification of public documents. The cause: two roasted pigs or "*lechon*."

Charged were Georgina Yu, chair and administrator of the Ecozone, and Bernardita Ebol, administrative officer and chief of staff.

In his complaint, Roldan Mayo, of Barangay Canelar here, alleged that Yu and Ebol took advantage of their positions and defrauded the Zamboanga Freeport Authority of P4,000—the amount used to pay for two roasted pigs offered by Ecozone employees as a gift to Yu on her birthday on Dec. 17 last year.

In his complaint, Mayo alleged that the pigs were paid using the Ecozone's funds..

And since there was no board resolution authorizing such an expense, Mayo said the two Ecozone officials were liable for falsification of public documents.

The Ecozone is governed by the board of directors, and acts through the board.

Mayo said he filed the complaint to seek justice and rid the government of abusive and insensitive officials who take advantage of their office by exploiting public funds to satisfy their personal pleasures.

Yu, a registered nurse who was appointed Ecozone chief by President Macapagal-Arroyo, refused to comment on the charges.

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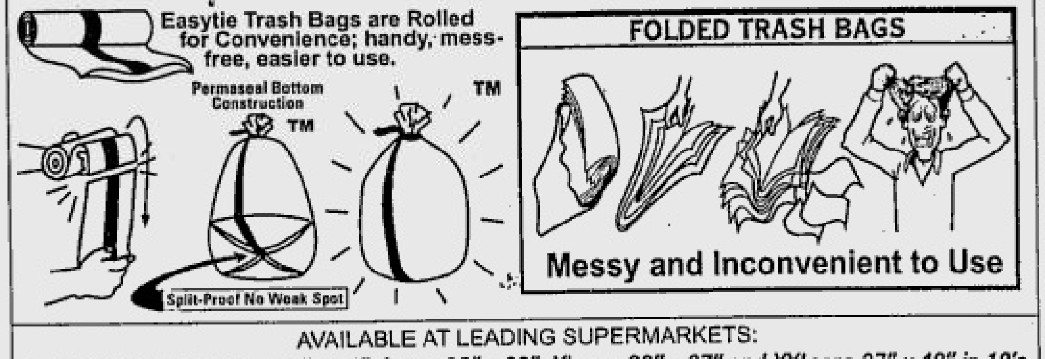

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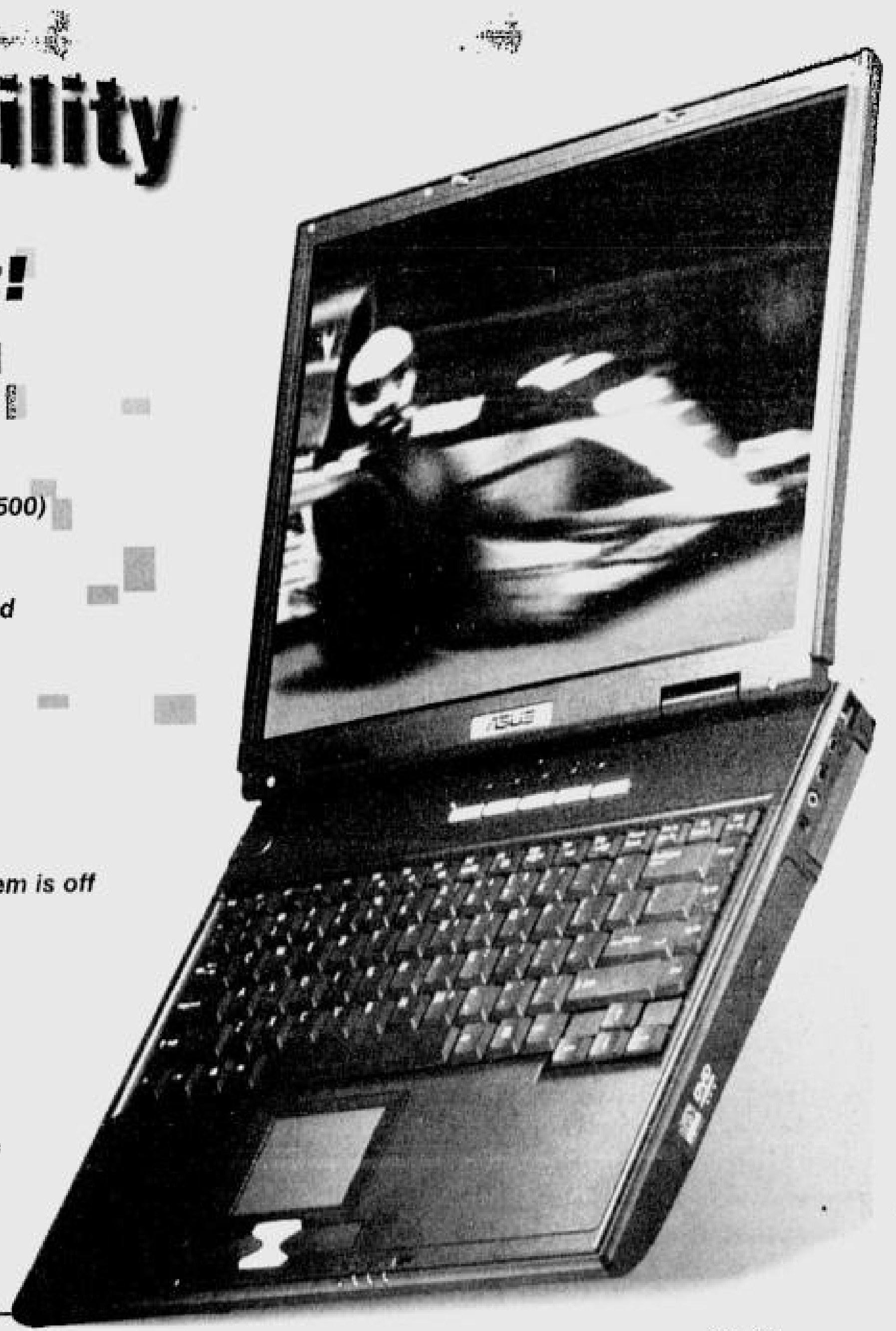

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Las Piñas typhoid victims to sue water firm

By Christian V. Esguerra

LAS PIÑAS residents downed by typhoid fever are poised to sue for damages the private water firm whose contaminated supply allegedly triggered an outbreak of the disease in a subdivision in the city.

"It's not enough that (firm officials) said sorry," said Gerald Santos, village officer of BF Resort Subdivision in Barangay Talon II.

"Someone died and hundreds contracted diseases because of their dirty water. We can't just leave things at that."

Last Friday, BF Waterworks owned up to the contaminated water supply that could have caused the spread of typhoid fever, diarrhea, and other ailments among residents of the subdivision since early this month.

Officials of the homeowners' association are now building a case against the water firm by collecting signatures and affidavits of residents who have fallen ill because of the contaminated water supply.

Santos said the documents would also be used in a petition against the granting of another franchise to BF Waterworks.

He said the firm is negotiating an extension of its franchise with the National Water Resources Board.

Henry Mercaida, BF Waterworks customer relations officer, yesterday said that it would be very expensive to contract another water supplier for the subdivision.

"All pipes are owned by BF Waterworks," he said. "Imagine the cost if a new firm comes in and builds its own pipes."

Mercaida said the firm is a sister company of BF Homes and provides the main water supply of all BF subdivisions.

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Pyramid scam victims continue to flock to NBI, says Wycoco

By Philip C. Tubeza

ABOUT 3,500 cases have been filed against pyramid scam suspects by the National Bureau of Investigation, but new complainants continue to surface everyday, according to NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said.

"There are so many complainants," Wycoco said. "But we still continue to get new complaints. If you've noticed, we have been quiet in recent weeks because we are still working on the pyramid scam cases."

Earlier, Wycoco had predicted that the number of pyramid scam victims could reach up to two million people.

The NBI director has set up Task Force Pyramid to deal with the victims, who continue to flock to the NBI everyday.

The task force is headed by NBI Assistant Director Lolito Utitco, and includes the heads of the NBI's Anti-Organized Crime Division, Interpol unit, Anti-Fraud and Computer Crimes Division, and its Special Task Force.

Wycoco said the Supreme Court's recent decision to freeze the suspects' assets is a big boost to the investigation.

"This means that their assets will be frozen indefinitely. We asked the Amlac (Anti-Money laundering Counci) to freeze their assets before but Amlac's freeze order lasts only for 30 days," Wycoco said.

The freeze order had given the victims some hope that they would recover the money they had invested.

But NBI officials had said that the victims would be "lucky to get 20 percent" of their investments.

"Sad to say but they were really duped. Much of their money is gone already," said lawyer Ricardo Diaz, NBI-Interpol chief.

"The suspects claim that they have investments here and abroad, but investigators believe that these are lies."

Yearbook Reference Edition out

THE 2003 Philippines Yearbook Reference Edition is now off the press.

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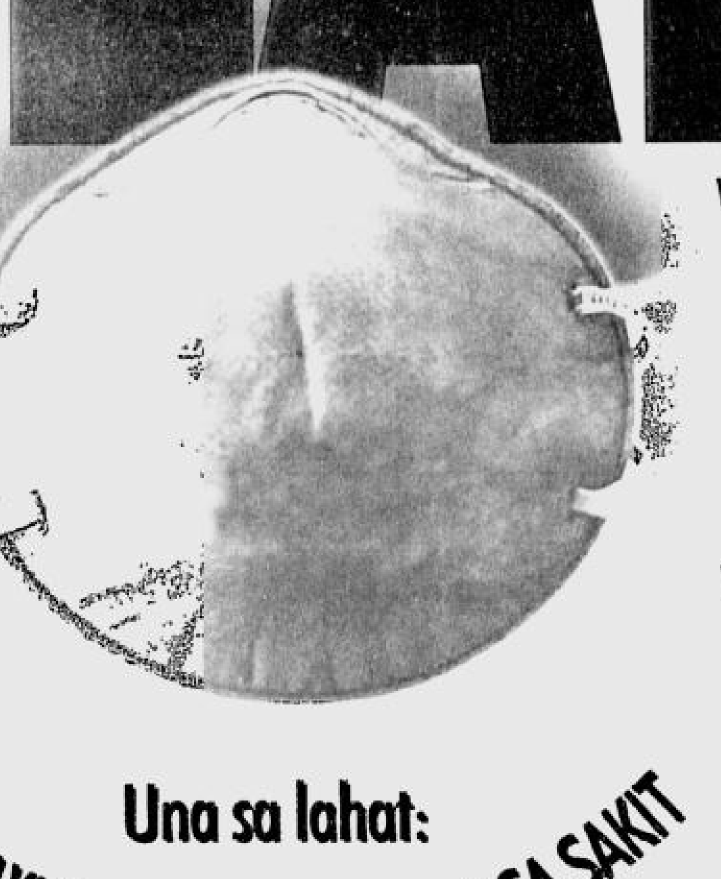

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‘Resto Gang’ strikes again

By Nelson F. Flores

MEMBERS of the so-called "Resto Gang" struck again Saturday night, robbing diners of a popular restaurant in Greenhills, San Juan.

Police said at least 10 members of the gang barged into the Kamameshi House along Connecticut Street at around 9:20 p.m. and announced a holdup.

Two of the suspects then started divesting the diners and restaurant staff of their cash and personal belongings. They also took the day's earnings of the restaurant.

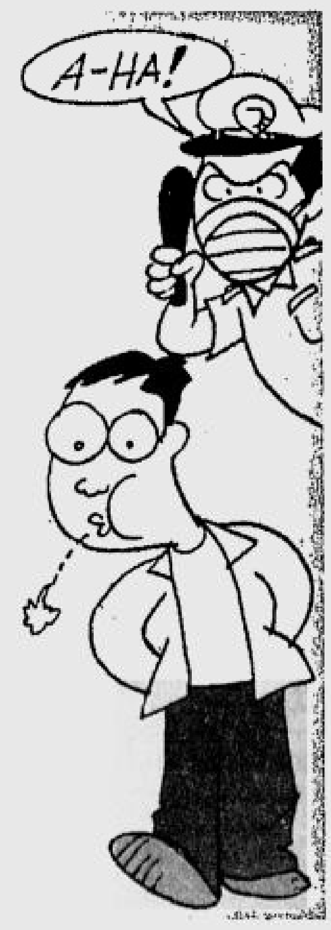
Police said no one was hurt in the robbery, which was carried out within a few minutes. The robbers then fled on board a gray Toyota Grandia with registration plate WSA 190.

The van sped toward Quezon City.

Subsequent police blocking operations failed to stop the van or even turn up anything in connection with the incident, the police added.

On Friday, the same gang robbed diners at the Outback Restaurant on E. Rodriguez Avenue in Libis, Quezon City, at around 10 p.m. The suspects fled with the diners' cash but spared the cashier.

Next time you spit, watch out



By Leila B. Salaverria

IN THEIR war against SARS, Metro Manila officials have turned to the law to prevent the spread of the disease, which has now claimed two lives in the country.

Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando on Thursday submitted a resolution to the Metro Manila Council asking the mayors to penalize people who spit in public.

Scientists have learned that SARS is transmitted in large droplets and that an infected person spreads the germs by coughing, sneezing, or spitting.

Fernando has since prohibited MMDA employees from spitting in public.

Metro Manila mayors have approved Fernando's resolution, which would help prevent the spread of SARS, according to the MMDA chair. He said that it is now up to the local executives to pass their own anti-spitting ordinances.

Earlier, Fernando said that he wants an anti-spitting ordinance to cover the whole of Metro Manila. He said spitting is not only a disgusting habit but also unsanitary.

Fernando said he would convene the health officials of the 17 towns and cities in the metropolis so that they could map out plans on how to prevent SARS from spreading in Metro Manila.

He added that it would also be a good idea to implement an ordinance imposing a quarantine or a ban on animals in densely populated places.

Phones stolen in QC mall parking lot

By Agnes Donato

ROBBERS forcibly opened a delivery van inside a mall parking lot in Quezon City on Saturday and took cellular phones and accessories worth P1.3 million.

Police said the van is owned by Ximex Delivery Express, a supplier of the Globe Business Center at SM Fairview.

XDE accounting manager John Paul Jeorge told police that the van, driven by company driver Cesar Manuel, and helper Allan Rodolfo, went to SM Fairview to deliver the cell phones and accessories.

Jeorge said Manuel had parked the van at the second floor of the parking lot at 11:30 a.m.

Rodolfo then got off and went to the Globe Business Center to advise the manager about the delivery. Manuel followed Rodolfo after a few minutes.

When they returned to the parking space, however, they found the van's door and windows opened and the phones and accessories missing.

Bare Eye

THIS popular column of Recah Trinidad will now be read in the Sports section.

NBI stalls on textbook case against Marquez

By Philip C. Tubeza

TO AVOID getting cited for contempt, the National Bureau of Investigation has yet to move forward in its inquiry over Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez's alleged faked signatures approving a controversial P6.5 million textbook deal.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said the bureau is still waiting for the Sandiganbayan's order allowing the bureau to get specimens of Marquez's signatures from the anti-graft court and the Office of the Ombudsman.

"The case is already with the Sandiganbayan so we cannot do anything (without the court's permission)," Wycoco said.

The Ombudsman filed graft charges in March against Marquez and three other officials before the Sandiganbayan after a businesswoman accused them of reneging on the textbook deal in 1998.

Complainant Lizabeth Carreon said she was assured of the payment once the books were delivered but she was never paid even after she followed it up for over a year.

Marquez claimed that his signature on the procurement order and on other documents relating to the deal were forged.

Marquez had to post a P30,000 bail for the graft charge and P40,000 for the estafa charge before the anti-graft court.

"We advised him that his lawyers should file a motion with the Sandiganbayan that will allow us to get the specimens of his signature during those years. The signature of people change over time," Wycoco said.

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METROBRIEFS

Not sure about abduction

MANILA police have not yet determined if the disappearance of a Filipino-Chinese businesswoman and her driver last Saturday was a kidnapping. Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong, Western Police District director, said no one had contacted the family of the woman to demand for ransom. He said the case had already been forwarded to the Police Anti-Crime and Emergency Response (Pacer) last Saturday. The woman was identified as a financier at the casino and her driver only as Dante. Police said the businesswoman's sister, who was with the victims, had reported the abduction of her sibling and the driver. Initial reports said that three armed men on board a black car (WDH-354) blocked the victim's green Honda CRV (WKB-598) on Del Pan and Valderama streets at 1:30 a.m. last Saturday. *Philip C. Tubeza*

Cop mauled by waiter

MAKATI Police Officer 2 Rodario Guerra, who trailed a suspected car thief inside Edith pubhouse in Barangay Olympia, landed in a hospital after he was mauled by waiter Reynaldo Abad Santos. Police said Guerra, who is assigned to the anti-car theft unit, followed the suspect inside the pubhouse at 11:45 p.m. on Friday and pretended to be a customer. But he got into a fight with Abad Santos, who mauled Guerra with the help of the bar's manager. Guerra was taken to the Ospital ng Makati for treatment, and Abad Santos was arrested by police. The bar's manager escaped, and the suspected car thief has remained free. *Leila B. Salaverria*

Killed in car collision

A COLLISION between a car and a jeepney in Parañaque last Saturday left Wilson Aguirre, the driver of the car, dead and eight others injured. Aguirre was driving a Toyota Corolla (UGL-836) and had four passengers with him, police said. He was driving along Presidents Avenue at about 12 midnight last Friday when his car collided with the jeepney (TJR-675) driven by Henry Gallego. Police said the impact was strong enough to injure all the occupants of the two vehicles and kill Aguirre. The injured victims were identified as Joefrey Reyes, Brian Escala, Rhon Blanco, Armando Mendoza, Rodney Medalla, Mary-Anne Gallego and Amihan Sultan. *Maria Khristina Villanueva*

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FERNANDO

Fernando gives up DPWH post

By Carlito Pablo

BAYANI Fernando, concurrent chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority and Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways, has made his choice.

Fernando, according to Malacañang, "opted to give up" the DPWH post to remain full-term chair of the MMDA, unclogging traffic and clearing sidewalks among others.

Fernando confirmed the news but refused to elaborate on the reason for his decision. But there were reports of "pressure" for Fernando to make a choice (*see sidebar*).

Palace spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has named Public Works Undersecretary Florante Soriquez as acting DPWH chief.

"Soriquez is a career employee who rose from the ranks to be assistant regional director to assistant secretary and then undersecretary of the DPWH," Bunye said in an official statement.

Fernando assumed the DPWH in concurrent capacity on January when then DPWH Secretary Simeon Datumanong was named to the Department of Justice.

Datumanong replaced controversial Justice Secretary Hernando Perez who was then waging an uphill fight against allegations that he extorted money from Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez.

Soriquez, 61, earned his civil engineering degree from the Mapua Institute of Technology and received advanced education in Germany and the United States.

According to Malacañang's statement, Soriquez "began his employment in 1962 as a humble laborer helping build the Manila International Airport Drive."

Records show that in April 1997, Soriquez and then DPWH Secretary Virgilio Vigilar, among others, were recommended for prosecution on graft charges by the Office of the Ombudsman.

The charges stemmed from the construction of the alleged "substandard" megadike in Central Luzon, which was supposedly meant to counter lahar flows.

According to a published report in July 2002, Soriquez was cleared of the graft charges.

Pressure led BF to make a decision?

By Christian V. Esguerra

AN OFFICIAL of the Metro Manila Development Authority yesterday said there was "pressure" for MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando to choose between two vital posts.

MMDA deputy chair Cesar Lacuna theorized that Fernando's decision to leave the DPWH and concentrate on the MMDA could have been triggered by "questions of legality" over his holding two Cabinet positions.

Lacuna did not say where the alleged pressure was coming from.

"It's possible that he was made to choose or he just voluntarily gave up the position," he told the INQUIRER.

Fernando's holding of the two positions were then seen by supporters and MMDA officials as the solution to the previously knotty coordination between the DPWH and the MMDA, especially in flood-control projects.

"During the three months that he was DPWH secretary, the coordination was very good. We were able to finish a lot," said Lacuna, who is tasked to clean up drainage systems and other clogged waterways.

"Now that he has given up the position, we don't really know how it would affect our programs at the MMDA."

LATE SPORTS

Realtors bury TJ Hotdogs

GAMES WEDNESDAY (Makati Coliseum)
5:00 p.m.—Talk N Text vs Alaska
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COMBINE Kenneth Duremdes with Dennis Espino and Marlou Aquino and what have you got?

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The troika accounted for 62 points, more than 80 percent of the Realtors' total output last night, as they subdued the Purefoods TJ Hotdogs, 75-71, in the Samsung-PBA All Filipino Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Aquino topscored with 22 points while Duremdes and Espino added 20 each for the Realtors, who climbed to a 7-win, 6-loss record in Group A.

It was Duremdes, however, who earned best player honors with eight points in the fourth quarter as Sta. Lucia rallied from five points down, 57-62.

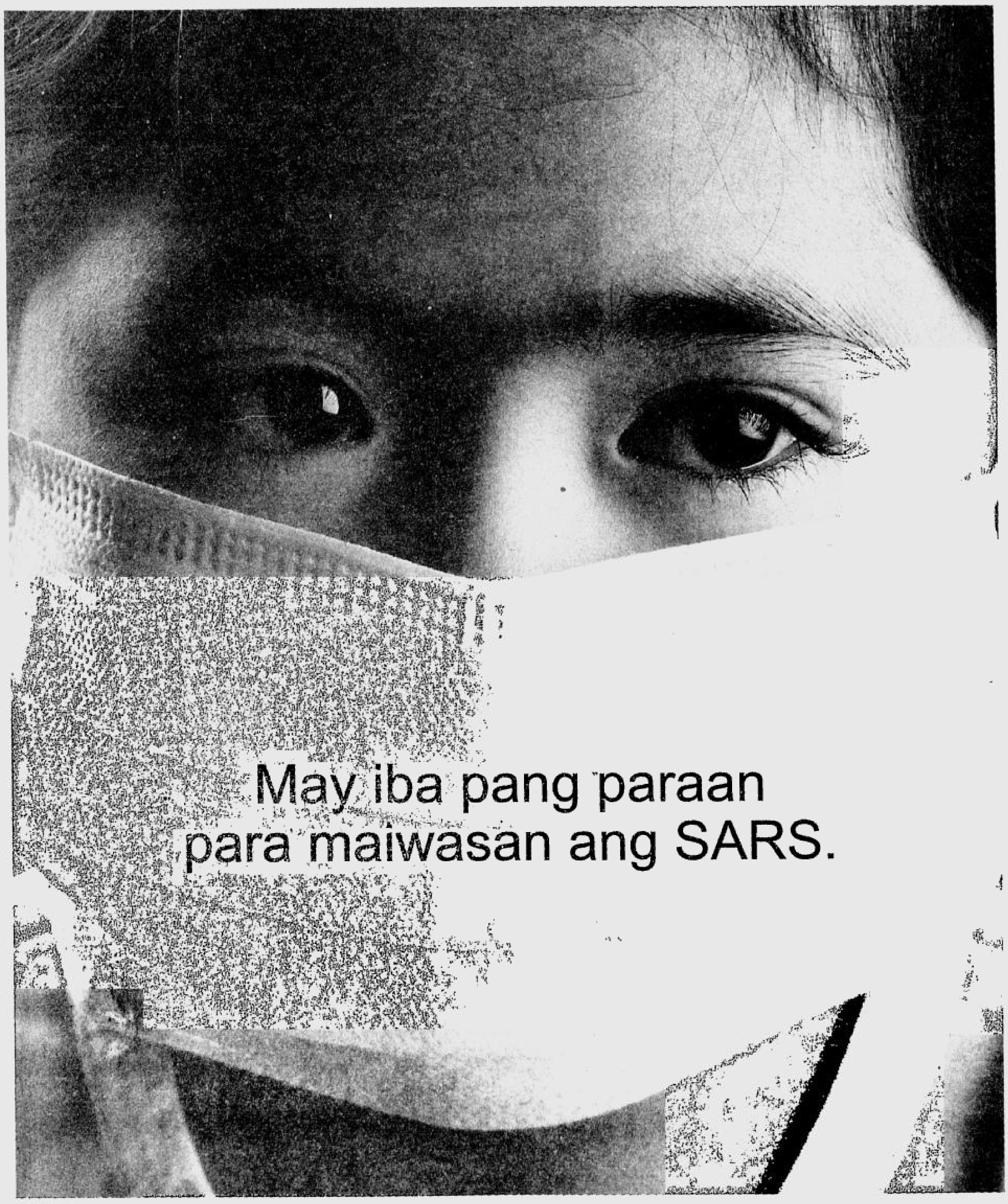
The 6-foot-3 Duremdes also collared 11 rebounds and issued 5 assists in a performance reminiscent of his MVP days while playing for Alaska.

Aquino also grabbed nine rebounds and had two blocks before fouling out with 1 minute and 30 seconds to go.

Purefoods slipped to a 5-8 record, its chances of reversing the outcome wiped out by four misses from the three-point zone.

FedEx nipped Batang Red Bull, 81-78, in the second game to level its slate at 6-6. Red Bull absorbed its second straight loss and dropped to 10-3. *Roy Luarca*

More Sports on A25-A31



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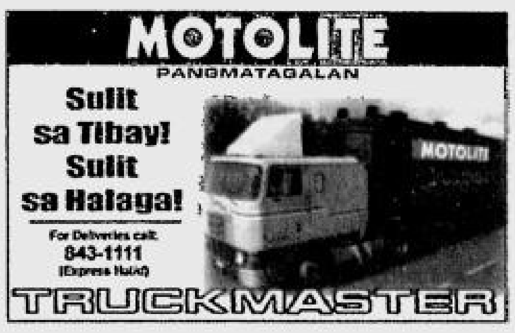
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MILF vows to spare Palaro

THE MORO Islamic Liberation Front has vowed not to disturb the Palarong Pambansa, slated in Lanao del Sur on May 4-11, a top Philippine Olympic Committee official announced yesterday.

POC chair Robert Aventajado, who worked as emissary to Mindanao rebel groups under former President Joseph Estrada, said the assurance of peace during the national games was made by Ghazali Jaafar, MILF vice chairman for political affairs.

Aventajado, who made the request to the MILF, said leaders of the rebel group are in the process of giving orders to field commanders in the area.

Aventajado said the MILF would issue a statement as soon as these commanders have been informed of the agreement.

"How the miitary and the government will take this is all up to them," Aventajado told the INQUIRER.

Earlier, Malacañang maintained a postponement of the Palaro appeared imminent but Lanao del Norte will remain the host.

"The venue (for the Palaro) will still be the same," presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said in an interview over radio station dzMM.

But due to threats to peace and order caused by recent clashes between government forces and the MILF, Bunye said there would most likely be a postponement."

"It would be difficult for us to have our athletes go there," he explained.

The province of Lanao del Norte, the Department of Education and Philippine Sports Commission have yet to submit their formal recommendation to President Macapagal-Arroyo whether to postpone the annual athletic competition.

Rep. Monico Puentebella, chair of the House committee on youth and sports, yesterday said cancelling the Palaro is out of the question.

"The President must bite the bullet and decide," he told reporters covering the PBL games in Bacolod yesterday.

"The games must go on, but security is paramount, "Sen. John Osmeña," who also attended the PBL affair, said.

The Philippine National Police earlier proposed the staging of the Palarong Pambansa outside of Lanao del Norte following the outbreak of clashes between government troops and secessionist rebels in Maigo and Kolambugan, the two towns nearest the capital town of Tubod, the venue of the national games.

The police and the military are scheduled to give their assessment today on whether Lanao del Norte is still fit to stage the 2003 Palarong Pambansa.

Lanao del Norte Gov. Imelda Quibranza-Dimaporo said they would rely on the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police to give them the real score.

The province had looked at a grim prospect of again losing the Palaro following the outbreak of hostilities in the two towns near Tubod.

Lanao del Norte, which made its first hosting bid in 1997, has been denied the honor three times already.

In 1997, it lost to Lingayen, Pangasinan and was forced to withdraw the following year due to the economic crunch that hit the Asian region.

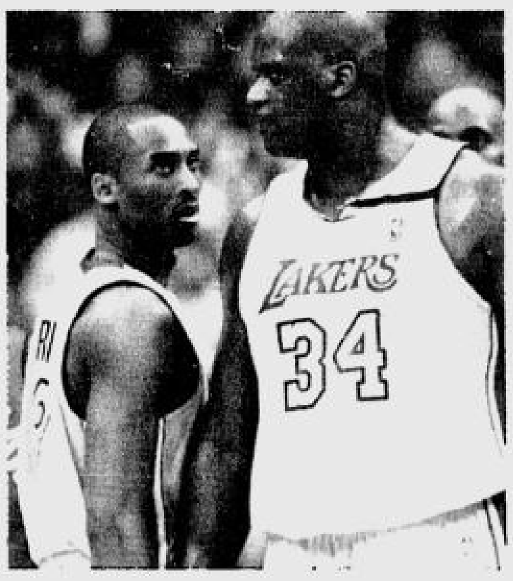
In 2000, the province blew it again after then President Joseph Estrada declared an all-out war against MILF which reduced Kauswagan town to a battle zone.

Last year, Dimaporo and her husband, Rep. Abdullah Dimaporo, agreed to give the hosting to Naga City upon the request of then DepEd Sec. Raul Roco.

The MILF, after launching two attacks on Thursday, reportedly threatened to wreck the long preparations for the Palaro.

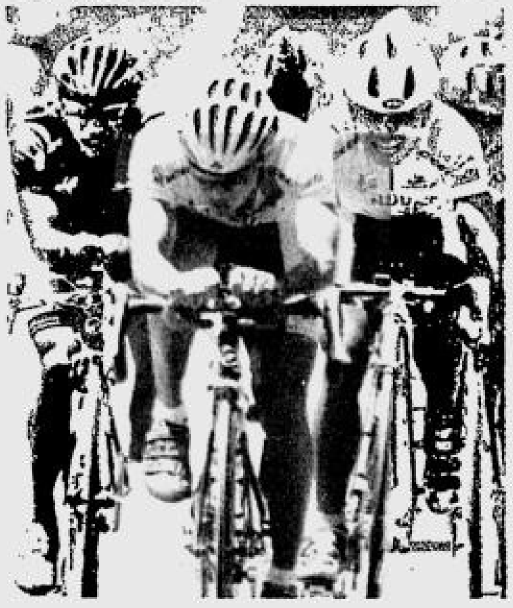
But the latest assurance of peace from the MILF could change the whole picture. *With a report from Carlito Pablo*

WHAT'S INSIDE



Kobe, Shaq get their act together /A30

Double whammy by Quirimit /A28



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Couples hurdles test for 1-shot lead

CLOSER TO VICTORY, Fred Couples lines his putt in the third round of the Houston Open.

GETTY IMAGES

HUMBLE, Texas—Fred Couples birdied the 18th hole to take a one-shot lead over Mark Calcavecchia after three rounds of the Houston Open on Saturday.

Couples's five-under-par 67 left him on 16-under 200 for the tournament, one ahead of Calcavecchia who fired a 68.

Australia's Stuart Appleby held third place on 202, with South Africa's Trevor Immelman in fourth place another stroke back after a sparkling round of 65.

World number two Ernie Els recorded his third straight 69 to tie for 21st, seven shots behind Couples and level with world number four Phil Mickelson.

Couples and Calcavecchia began the day tied for the lead with Hank Kuehne, who bogeyed the first three holes and dropped away with an even-par 72 at Redstone Golf Club.

The front nine proved to be a real test for the 43-year-old Couples. He birdied the par-five first hole, bogeyed the third and birdied the fourth.

A double-bogey six at the par-four seventh when he hit into the water dropped him to one-over for the round.

"That was something that wasn't a very good shot on seven," Couples said. "It just happened. I didn't catch it all.

"I was in the first cut of the rough, and Mark had hit a beautiful iron in there, and the pin was on the very front, and all the water was to the right and looked so easy that I just lost a train of thought.

"I told my caddie to take enough club every day to hit it in the back part of the green, and I just kind of came off the shot, toed it, didn't carry the water and that at the time felt like ... you are going to be semi out of this." BIRDIE PUTT After taking the double at number seven, Couples left an eight-foot birdie putt short on the eighth hole.

"The whole way the next tee, I just was basically screaming at myself, 'Just keep playing and be more aggressive,' because I had been playing very well." The pep talk seemed to work.

Couples birdied the ninth to finish the nine in par and the back nine was an entirely different matter as the 1992 U.S.

Masters champion birdied four consecutive holes, beginning at the 12th, before making birdie at the last.

The last time Couples held a 54-hole lead was in the 1998 Memorial, his last victory and he knows winning on Sunday will be difficult.

"There are so many guys close," Couples said. "Mark is playing very well, so certainly I will be watching him tomorrow, but there's so many guys at 11 or 12-under. If they go out and shoot seven or eight-under, means I have to play another very good round.

"I expect to do that. Is that going to happen? I don't know.

It's been a long time. *AP*

Move over, Sergio; here comes Pablo

COSTA ADEJE, Canary Islands—Spanish teenager Pablo Martin shot an 8-under-par 64 on Saturday to join a six-way tie for first after three rounds in the 1.75 million euro (US$1.9 million) Spanish Open.

Martin and the others lead at 19 under on the 6,233-meter Golf Costa Adeje course on Tenerife.

Martin, the Spanish Amateur Champion and just 17 years and 10 days, is on track to become the youngest ever winner of a European Tour title. The previous holder was South Africa's Dale Hayes, who won the 1971 Spanish Open at El Prat.

Defending champion Sergio Garcia of Spain, himself a former teenage prodigy, shot a 66, leaving him five shots himself a former teenage prodigy, from the leaders.

England's Kenneth Ferrie equaled Friday's round of 65 to stay with the leading pack. Eagles at the 13th and 18th holes repaired any damage done after a third-hole bogie.

Fellow countryman Paul Casey will also start the final day at the top of the leaderboard despite chipping poorly on the first and last holes and taking three putts to finish the par-3 14th.

Another leader, Santiago Luna of Spain, made excellent use of the greens, sinking a 20-foot (6-meter) putt at the 8th.

England's Simon Khan and Soeren Hansen of Denmark complete the frontrunners, Hansen another player finding favor with the greens after a 15-foot (4.5-meter putt) for an eagle at the 5th.

Julian Clement, the first Swiss player on the Tour since Paolo Quirici, and Brian Davis of England lie one shot short of the lead at 18 under.

Davis looked uncomfortable with the putter but managed a 7-under 65 to remain in contention.

"I'm looking for a 64 tomorrow to win," he said as he headed for some green practice.

Jose Maria Olazabal, chasing his first national championship title, shot a 69 to end up three shots off the pace.

2 junior golfers seek unbeaten summer

By Jong Arcano

WOLEN Juan Superal and Dottie Ardina, both unbeaten in summer, seek to keep their winning roll in Class D, while Jayvie Agojo goes for another win in Class A when the Samsung Jungolf Tour moves to the Player course of the Orchard Golf and Country Club for the fourth leg starting today.

Counting the Philippine Airlines Junior Interclub circuit opener, Superal has so far racked up five victories in the division for 11-12 year-olds, while Ardina is 4-of-4 after missing one leg.

Agojo had won her first three events so far.

Already assured of trips to the Junior World in San Diego, California, Superal and Ardina are slugging it out in the chase for Most Valuable Player honors at stake in the various age-group levels both for the summer and the whole season.

They recently led the Junior World qualifiers, 10 division champions, and 14 other runners-up who will make up the national contingent to America. The rest of the Tour will merely serve as training for all the flag-bearers with Jungolf officials hoping they reach their peak form by the time they leave in the first week of July.

Gerry Handog, president of Jungolf, said that, with the MVP trophies up for grabs, each leg will be important even for the non-Junior World qualifiers.

SUPERAL

"We have at least five more legs left in the summer and I know the competition in most of the legs will remain tight even if some of last week's winners have decided to rest," said Handog.

Handog's own daughter, Geleen, is among the absentees. Geleen saw her four-leg streak stopped by Debbie de Villa in a major outing last week after sustaining an ankle injury that had her limping through the last two holes just to keep her slot in the team.

Other big guns entered are Nonoy Negrido, Lawrence Macatangay and Jik Jik Abdon.

The regular co-sponsors of the Samsung Jungolf Tour are Philippine Airlines, Airlift Asia, Air Liquide Phils., Global Lighting and Exito Manufacturing. Pisanti Golf, Bellevue Manila, Third World Eximport, HBW Enterprises, MCCI Corp. and BF Technology are also sponsors.

Bogeyless Karrie's on top

STOCKBRIDGE, Georgia—Karrie Webb, the two-time Player of the Year from Australia, built a two-shot lead Saturday, playing her second straight bogey-free round at the soggy 1.35 million dollar LPGA event.

Webb has followed her new plan to perfection, avoiding big numbers - like the quadruple-bogey she had last week in Las Vegas - at any point during her round.

"That stops a lot of momentum, and you have to play catchup from there," said Webb, who is winless since claiming last year's Women's British Open. "You have to make up for your mistakes." *AFP*

Feeling flat

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

I LEFT the Philsports Arena last Friday feeling flat. Aside from the fact that my favorite PBA team, Batang Red Bull, lost to rejuvenated Talk N Text in overtime, 96-98. I was deeply disappointed to know that a marquee player like Jimwell Torion, the 5-foot-9 spitfire from Argao, Cebu, had failed a random drug test and subsequently been banned indefinitely by PBA Commissioner Noli Eala. Red Bull management has also suspended the 27-year-old Torion until such time that he can prove he has already overcome his problem, stressing that it is not condoning the misconduct of its players no matter how good they are.

"Torion always plays with raw courage and confidence even against his more experienced rivals," coach Yeng Guiao said in an interview. "But he still needs guidance. I know he is a good point guard, but he is young and likely to commit mistakes."

"Torion is a valuable member of our team, but the Batang Red Bull management is taking appropriate action against him because we believe our players should serve as role models for the youth," team manager Tony Chua said. "Batang Red Bull is behind the Philippine Basketball Association in its crusade against drugs and will fully cooperate in all its programs because we are a part of the PBA family."

Torion offered no excuses for his misdeed, Chua added. Instead, he apologized to the team, the league and his fans for committing the most costly mistake of his life. "Torion did not try to fool me," Chua said. "And I admire him for that. He admitted his mistake, but stressed he's not a drug addict."

Torion's early basketball years promised nothing lofty. But when he came to the Big City in the late 1990s to play for Batang Red Bull he started to reap fame and fortune.

"Jimwell and I come from poor families in Argao," said his longtime friend and teammate Junthy Valenzuela. "He knows that playing in the PBA will help his family."

Commissioner Eala said he was saddened by what Torion did, but Torion has to account for his act. "We are sending a strong message to all PBA players: Do not go into some reckless adventurism or you pay a high price." On the suggestion that Torion be banned for life, Eala said players who commit this kind of mistake should not be treated like criminals. "They should be treated as people having drug problems who need our help."

***

ALL SET FOR MILO OPEN. Everything is in readiness for the blue-ribbon Milo National Open Track and Field meet on May 1-4 at the Rizal Memorial oval. "It's all systems go," said a beaming Go Teng Kok, president of the organizing Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association. "China and Hong Kong, two of the places hardest hit by SARS, have begged off," Go stressed, "but the more important news is that Thailand and Malaysia, the Philippines' toughest rivals in this year's SEA Games, are participating. For sure, this will give our athletes the chance to prove their true worth in their quest for slots in the national team.

***

HATS OFF TO TATAP'S VIC. Originally set last April 22-25, the LG 9th Southeast Asian Table Tennis Championships has been reset to September this year due to the unabated spread of SARS. You see players from Singapore and Vietnam, two of the countries most affected by the killer pneumonia, have been invited to play here. "We have decided to reset the meet for the good of all the participants and for the sake of national interest," said Victor Valbuena, president of the host Table Tennis Association of the Philippines. *Mabuhay ka*, Vic! I have earlier asked sports organizers of Asian meets here, most of whom are my friends, to postpone their tournaments because I don't want them to be blamed later by an angry public for bringing to the Philippines those athletes and officials from SARS-infected countries.

Wellness in the Workplace

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DR. LEONORA PANLASIGUI, scientist and Professor of Nutritional Sciences, nutritional consultant of several companies, and author of books and international journals. She teaches Food Science and Nutrition at the University of the Philippines, and has lectured in local and international conferences, seminars and scientific meetings.

DR. JOSE RAUL CANLAS, Doctor of Sports Medicine and Orthopedic Surgery, Section Chief for Sports Medicine in St. Luke's Medical Center. He was head of the medical team for the last Olympic and Asian games, and is Team Physician for Philippine delegations and other sports teams.

VIVIAN ZAPANTA, certified fitness instructor of Asian Development Bank and San Miguel Corporation, as well as personal trainer of prominent personalities. She has lectured on fitness and health to organizations, private corporations and universities.

CORY QUIRINO, TV host of the longest-running lifestyle magazine show in the Philippines, wellness columnist, and author. She has also given lectures on total wellness.

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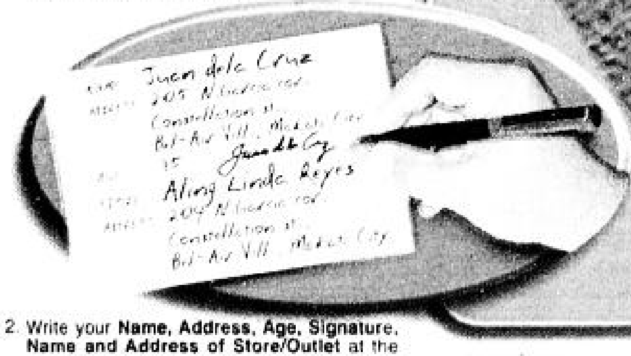
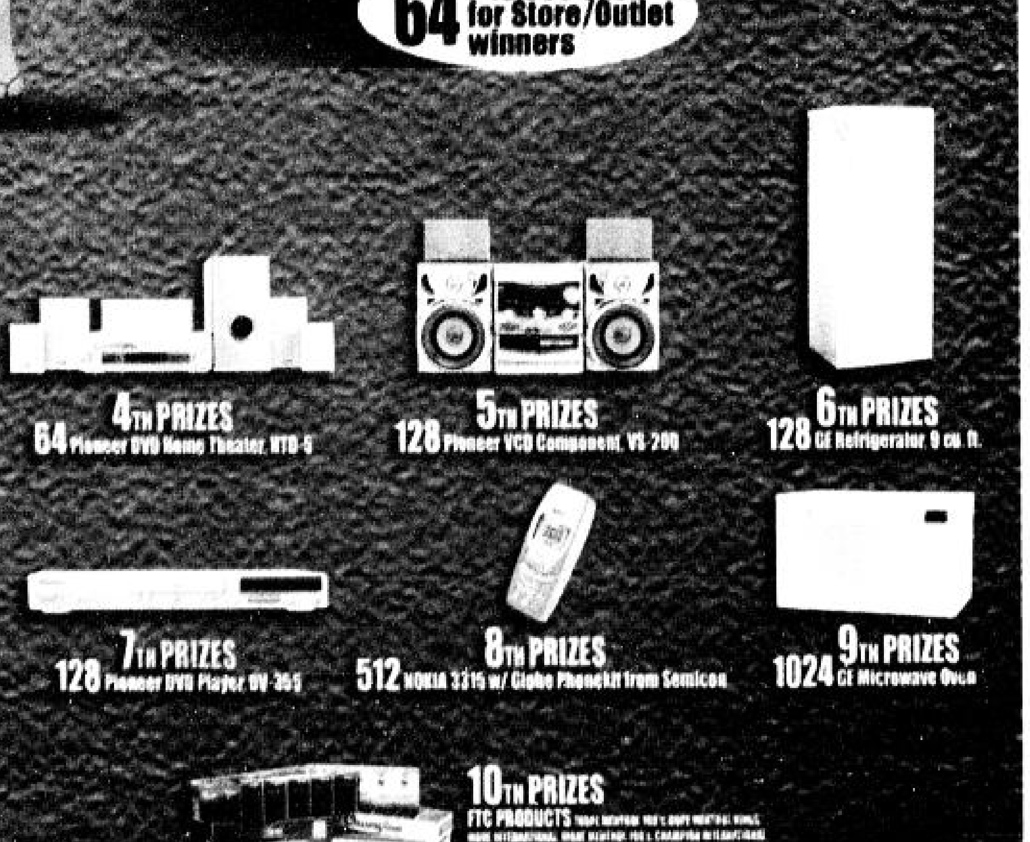
1. You must be **18 years old and above** and a **Philippine resident** to join.



2. Write your **Name, Address, Age, Signature, Name and Address of Store/Outlet** at the back of empty packs of the following participating brands. HOPE 100's, HOPE Kings, More International Kings, More Menthol 100's, Fortune International, Fortune International Menthol Kings, Fortune Extra Menthol 100's, Fortune Extra Menthol Kings, Fortune Extra Filter Kings, Champion International, Champion Kings, Champion Lights, Champion 100's, Mark 100's, Mark Kings, Winston, Winston Lights, and Camel Filter Kings.
3. All entries must have a **portion of the pack seal.**
4. Only **Genuine** and **Original** packs of participating brands made by Fortune Tobacco Corporation will be honored.
5. Drop your entries in **Drop Boxes** at designated drop centers.
6. **You can only win 1 prize per Grand Draw.** If your name is drawn more than once in a given draw, you win the bigger prize and forfeit the prize with a lesser price value.
7. **The Stores/Outlets have a chance to win Cash Prizes in the Major Prize Category** (1st to 3th prizes only). In the event that a Store/Outlet owner wins a Major Prize during the draw, he or she will also win the corresponding cash prize for the Store/Outlet.
8. If a winning entry does not bear the Name and Address of the Store/Outlet, the entry will still be valid but no Store/Outlet Winner will be declared for the corresponding cash prize.
9. The following are the four (4) Grand Draw dates:
   1st Draw: June 28, 2003
   2nd Draw: October 4, 2003
   3rd Draw: January 17, 2004
   4th Draw: April 24, 2004
   (NOTE: Subject to change and will be announced in advance.)
10. Deadline for submission of entries per Grand Draw:
    a. Provincial Entries - ten (10) days before the Grand Draw
    b. Metro Manila Entries - 1 week before the Grand Draw
11. Only official representatives from Fortune Tobacco Corporation and DOH-BFAD will validate all winning raffle entries during the Pre-Draw and Grand Draw.
12. Major Prize Winners (for the 1st to the 3rd Prizes) will be drawn during a LIVE TELECAST of the Grand Draw in NBN Channel 4. Minor Prize winners (for the 4th to the 10th Prizes) will be pre-drawn prior to each Grand Draw Show.
13. The Raffle Prize and Store/Outlet winners of the 1st to the 9th Prizes will be published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer nine (9) days after the Grand Draw Show. As for the 10th Prizes Winners, a separate list of their names will be posted in the district/branch offices of Fortune Tobacco Corp. nationwide.
14. **All prizes are TAX PAID.** No fees are required to claim prizes.
15. **Winners of the 1st to the 9th Prizes will be notified by telegram** as to when and where they may claim their prizes. **It must be personally claimed.** The prizes of the 10th Prize Winners will be delivered at their respective home addresses.
16. When claiming the prizes, **the winner must present the telegram and two (2) ID's bearing their photos and signatures.** In case the claimant is unable to comply with these requirements, he or she must execute an affidavit to verify and establish his or her identity.
17. **As for the Store/Outlet Winners, they must also present the telegram, two (2) ID's bearing their photos and signatures, and a copy of their business permit.**
18. **Prizes not claimed after sixty (60) days from the publication of the Winners Ad will be forfeited.**
19. **Non-winning entries per Grand Draw will not qualify for the next Grand Draw.**
20. Employees of Fortune Tobacco Corporation, its Advertising Agencies and DOH-BFAD as well as their relatives up to the 2nd degree of consanguinity are not qualified to join this promotion.



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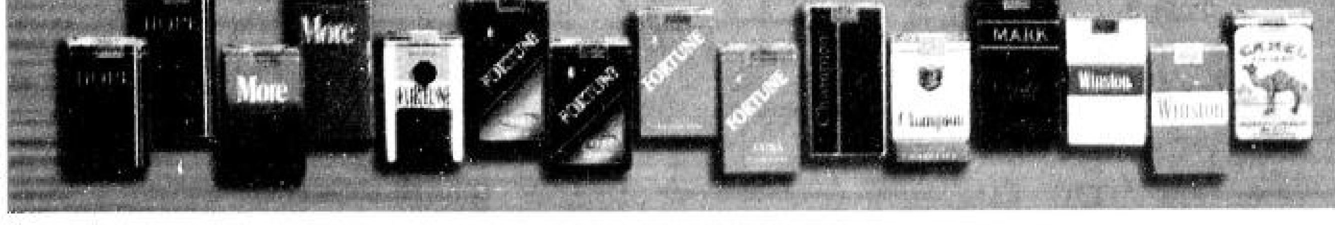

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Double whammy by Quirimit

MAYON WATCH: Children at the foot of Mayon Volcano watch the country's biggest summer spectacle against the backdrop of the volcano's perfect cone. VAL HANDU

NAGA CITY (via PLDT)—Arnel Quirimit solidified his claim to the yellow jersey of leadership yesterday by spearheading the Tanduay Distillers to a swashbuckling victory in the Team Time Trial serving as second lap of the Tour Pilipinas 2003 bikathon.

His 27-year-old legs still oozing with power, Quirimit, the first-lap winner, supplied the inspiration and killing pace as the Distillers came up with a blistering run that saw them overtake the Postmen of Enrique Domingo, who were sent off five minutes ahead of them.

The Distillers finished with an accumulated time of eight hours, eight minutes and 13 seconds for the 91.2-km drive from Daraga, Albay, to here as they took the lead in the overall race for the P1-million top team prize.

More importantly, Quirimit's time of two hours three minutes and three seconds which was added to his clocking in the first stage, boosted him out front in the individual race.

From a four-second lead, Quirimit emerged with a hefty four-minute, three-second- advantage over Santi Barnachea, whose Bowling Gold squad finished second for the day.

Merculio Ramos of Samsung, second behind Quirimit the other day, dropped to third, 4:32 behind, followed by Eusebio Quiñones (5:53 behind) and Placido Valdez (6:08 behind).

"I'm not worried about them. They should worry about me," said Quirimit in Tagalog as he exuded confidence of going all the way in the 15-lap, 18-day event celebrating the return of multi-stage cycling since 1998.

Organizers decided to do away with the old rule in team time trials where the time of the fourth-finishing rider becomes the clocking of the team and this led to sizzling runs that exposed the strength of Quirimit's squad.

"Madalas kasi hindi na lumalaban iyong nasa huli. Pinapabayaan na lang nilang kumayod iyong apat sa unahan. Para maiwasan iyon, counted na lahat ng oras nila (It used to be a race only for the four strongest riders of a team, so we decided to make everybody's time counts)," said Tour Pilipinas race manager Paquito Rivas.

"We were only bent on supporting Arnel but when we overtook Domingo's team we decided to go all the way," said Tanduay coach Hector Villanueva, a former Tour veteran, in Tagalog.

Two-time champion

Bowling Gold stood only 28.97 seconds behind Tanduay in the team race with Patrol 117, the day's third placer, winding up 1:54.36 off the lead.

Pagcor remained fourth followed by Eco Savers, Samsung, VAT Riders, Intel, Drug Busters, Postmen, PLDT-NDD and Gilbey's Land Punch.

Among the favorites, it was Carlo Guieb, who made the most significant move as the former two-time champion advanced to eighth, 9:17 behind Quirimit, an Army Corporal who hails from Pozzorubio, Pangasinan.

Warren Davadilla, who ruled the last bikathon in 1998 where Quirimit placed sixth overall, was in 18th place, 12:20 behind, while another two-time winner, Renato Dolosa, stood in 28th place, 14:14 off the lead.

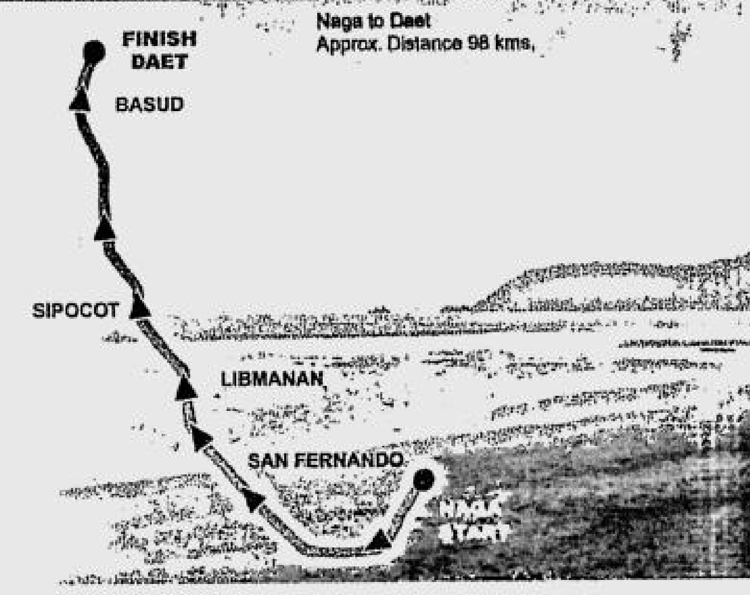
Quirimit, ably supported by Ericson Obosa, Dominador Jacob and Joseph Millanes, overhauled Domingo and the Postmen in the last 30 kilometers.

Domingo, fifth place overall in the 1996 Tour, said his teammates—Reynaldo Navarro, Wilfredo Calosa, Renato Sambrano, Rene Esteban, Sherwin Carrera and Arnold Marcelo—were just tired after Saturday's kick-off stage.

Another easy lap awaits the cyclists in today's 98-km th stage ending in Daet, Camari Norte, although they will have do some climbing in the famo Bitukang Manok stretch right ter leaving the boundary of marines Sur.

TEAM EFFORT: Tanduay skipper Arnel Quirimit (green jersey) pushes his team to the finish line in yesterday's second lap to Naga City. VAL HANDUMON

THIRD STAGE: MASSED START

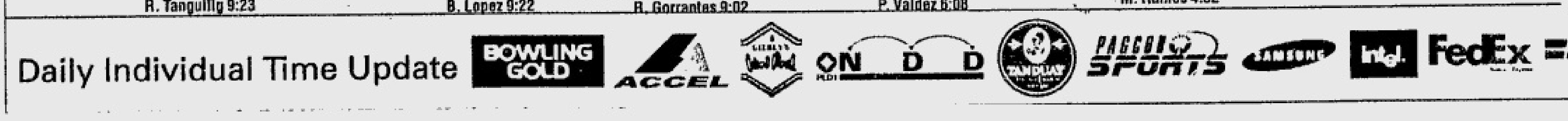


First Lap Results

RANK	RIDER		TEAM	TIME
1	Arnel	Quirimit	TAN	06h34'46
2	Santi	Barnachea	BOW	4'03
3	Merculo	Ramos	SAM	4'32
4	Eusebio	Quiñones	PAT	5'53
5	Placido	Valdez	DRU	6'08
6	Rolando	Pagnanawon	BOW	7'25
7	Ronald	Gorrantes	ECO	9'02
8	Carlo	Guieb	ECO	9'17
9	Benito	Lopez	VAT	9'22
10	Arnel	Espino	PAG	9'23
11	Lloyd	Reynante	PAG	
12	Rhyan	Tanguilig	PAG	
13	Reinhard	Gorantes	ECO	9'24
14	Rodelio	Valdez	SAM	10'48
15	Paterno	Curtan	ECO	11'51
16	Bernard	Luzon	PAT	11'58
17	Gerry	Amar	PAT	
18	Warren	Davadilla	INT	12'20
19	Fernando	Alagano	INT	
20	Enrique	Domingo	POS	12'25
21	Arthur	Bucay	INT	12'34
22	Sherwin	Diamsay	VAT	12'48
23	Joel	Calderon	VAT	
24	Oscar	Espiritu	TAN	12'56
25	Joffrey	Talaver	BOW	13'10
26	Dionisio	Mendoza	BOW	13'18
27	Ericson	Obosa	TAN	13'24
28	Renato	Dolosa	GIL	14'14
29	Michael	Gonowon	BOW	14'30
30	Alfredo	Mapa	BOW	
31	Alfie	Catalan	BOW	
32	Carlo	Jazul	ECO	16'21
33	June	Villanueva	PAG	16'27
34	Dionisio	Posliero	PAT	16'28
35	Dominador	Jacob	TAN	16'37
36	Jessie	Bacudo	PLD	17'27
37	Frederick	Feliciano	DRU	17'34
38	Danny	Ganigan	SAM	17'53
39	Wilfredo	Calosa	POS	17'56
40	Manuel	Mendoza	SAM	
41	Albert	Primero	PLD	
42	Arnold	Marcelo	POS	18'09
43	Joseph	Millanes	TAN	18'31
44	Felix	Celeste	VAT	18'33
45	Ruel	Casaljay	GIL	18'44
46	Nilo	Estayo	INT	19'24
47	Michael	Reyes	INT	
48	Oscar	Fronda	PLD	19'26
49	Ryan	Mendoza	PAT	19'42
50	Avelino	Bayuga	VAT	19'53
51	Lito	Atilano	GIL	21'52
52	Virgilio	Muena	PLD	21'57
53	Joel	Guillen	PAG	22'43
54	Dominador	Tacu-tacu	SAM	22'59
55	Joseph	Servino	PAT	23'32
56	Noli	Del Rosario	PLD	24'23
57	Reynaldo	Navarro	POS	24'36
58	Oscar	Rendole	DRU	
59	Benigno	Marmol	GIL	25'08
60	Razon	Galdonez	INT	25'16
61	Paulo	Manapol	INT	
62	Virgilio	Espiritu	ECO	25'31
63	Reynaldo	Asuncion	GIL	25'42
64	Art	Dela Cruz	DRU	26'11
65	Marcial	Robosa	VAT	26'19
66	Jay	Tolentino	PAG	26'45
67	Norberto	Atizado	DRU	27'12
68	Desi	Hardin	GIL	28'52
69	Jesus	Garcia	TAN	29'03
70	Gerard	Asiado	POS	30'21
71	Eric	Tolentino	TAN	31'17
72	Nicanor	Ramos	PAG	32'47
73	Michael	Primero	GIL	34'39
74	Hilario	Ladra	ECO	37'07
75	Jecky	Barrantes	DRU	39'42
76	Roque	Bautista	PLD	43'41
77	Michael	Justiniano	ECO	46'48
78	Garry	Apolinar	SAM	48'59
79	Rene	Esteban	POS	56'07
80	Sherwin	Carrera	POS	2'35
81	Bernard	Llentada	DRU	1h05'0
82	Ranier	Austria	PLD	1h16'4
83	Robert	Villaver	VAT	1h26'
84	Richard	Aquino	SAM	1h43'

TEAM STANDINGS

Place	Team	Timed	Deficit
1	Tanduay Distillers	26h56'27.47	00
2	Bowling Gold	26h56'56.45	00h00'28
3	Patrol 117	26h58'21.84	00h01'54
4	Pagcor	27h03'43.57	00h07'16
5	Eco Savers	27h05'39.19	00h09'11
6	Samsung	27h10'13.23	00h13'45
7	Vat Riders	27h12'39.57	00h16'12
8	Intel	27h14'13.83	00h17'46
9	Drug Busters	27h26'12.35	00h29'44
10	Postmen	27h27'06.70	00h30'39
11	PLDT-NDD	27h31'18.34	00h34'50
12	Gilbeys Island Punch	27h37'49.80	00h41'22



Daily Individual Time Update

Fireflies tour: Thousands bike for clean air

By Luige del Puerto

EVERY TIME Dinna Louise Dayao goes out biking, she knows she exposes herself to polluted air and reckless drivers. But she bikes all the same, she said, to "affirm that cycling is efficient, environmentally sensible and a healthy means of transport."

Together with more than 2,000 bikers, Dinna, a freelance writer, battled the relentless summer heat and toured seven cities in Metro Manila yesterday to spread the gospel of biking.

They called the event, the "Tour of the Fireflies," a tribute to the light-carrying creatures that are disappearing fast in urban centers. "Fireflies are very sensitive insects, and very beautiful too. They are, however, dying in Metro Manila because of pollution," Dinna told the INQUIRER.

"Like them, we are dying too, albeit slowly, because of pollution. We bike to show everyone that we want clean air, now" she said.

Metro Manila has more than two million vehicles, which produce 75 percent of the air pollution in the capital. Next to New Delhi, Shanghai and Mexico City, Metro Manila is the world's most polluted city.

Many of those who joined the tour were first-timers. Among them was Jasper Manlapaz, a footballer. Jasper rides his bike to work.

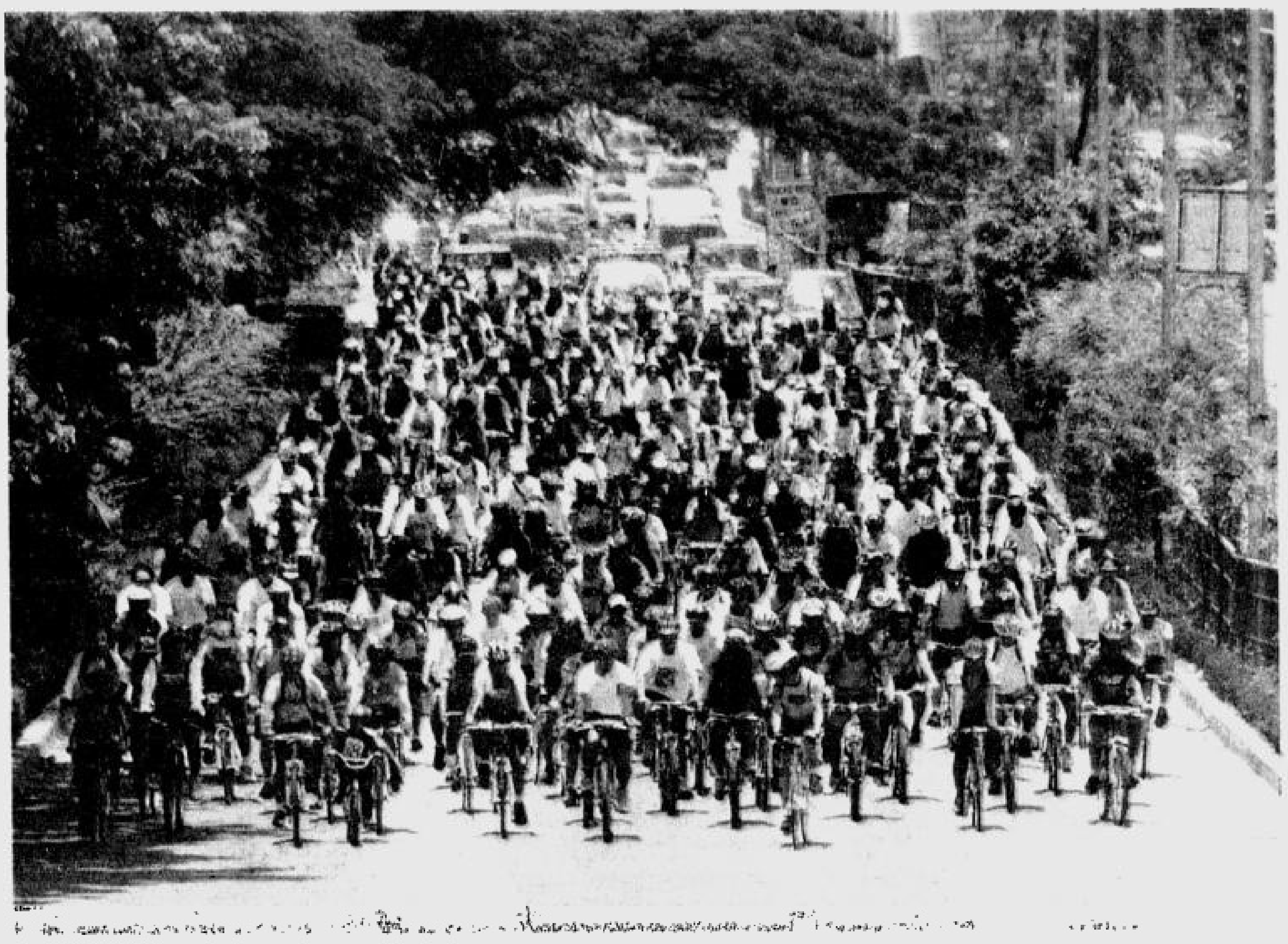
"When you choose to bike, you help the environment by not producing toxic fumes. In the process you also exercise your heart, ensuring a healthy life," he said.

Another first-timer was Ayran Arellano, a 5-year-old boy. His father Ridan brought him along with his elder brother Ayrl. Dressed like a firefly, Ayran has yet to understand the politics of biking, but he loves to bike, says his dad. "I want my children to grow up in a pollution-free city with biking lanes," Ridan said.

The veteran cylist Roberto Abellar Sarreal, a pollster, missed the tour this year due to an inguinal hernia operation. At 74, he has been the oldest racer in the tour.

Riding in a support vehicle, Sarreal said biking has kept him healthy. He calls on senior citizens to do the same. "Next year, I'll be on," he said.

Catrina Rasha Ricardo won this year's best firefly costume competition. For her prize, she will fly to Bangkok, courtesy of Lufthansa Airlines, in an all-expense paid three-day trip.



BIKER dons a firefly costume in honor of the vanishing nocturnal creature. JOAN BONDOC

PEDAL POWER: Thousands push off at the Katipunan riverbanks for the start of the annual Tour of the Fireflies. JOAN BONDOC

Started in 1999, the Tour of the Fireflies has been urging people to ride bikes, instead of cars. Firefly Brigade, the tour organizer, said the government would do well to promote biking as an alternative transportation system.

The key to this, the group said, is a more efficient local bicycle traffic, such as the 66-kilometer bikeway network constructed in Marikina through a World Bank grant.

The brigade is now working on transforming the University of the Philippines in Diliman into a calmer and safer "bike" campus. The campus oval has been rendered "car-free" on Sundays so people can walk and ride bike without fear of getting bumped or sideswiped by a car.

Indeed, the benefits of biking are endless, contends the group.

Bikes are pollution free. They don't burn anything, except calories. Bikes are cheap. Maintenance is cheap. In fact, more and more workers are buying bikes to save on fare.

Yet the biggest winner in biking is ultimately one's health, everyone agrees. By the time one gets to the office, he or she would have toned his or her muscles, circulated oxygen to his or her body efficiently, and exercised his or her heart.

Former rookie champ now the tour's most senior

DESPITE his age, Rolando Pagnanawon is still hoping to relive the glory of 1986 when he became only the third rookie to win the Tour.

"Those were the days," said the now 43-year-old Pagnanawon in Tagalog. "Though I cannot be a rookie champion again, I just hope to experience the feeling of winning the Tour once more."

Cornelio Padilla Jr., now a lawyer and top official of the current Tour Pilipinas 2003, did the trick in 1966 while Pangasinan pride Romeo Bonzo duplicated the feat in the early 80s.

As the most senior citizen among the 84 cyclists, Pagnanawon said his experience would be greatly challenged by the younger, stronger and more aggressive riders in the field.

"Whatever it takes, I will keep on trying just to get the crown," said Pagnanawon, who felt sorry for teammateSanty Barnachea's misfortunes in the first lap Friday.

Barnachea led most of the way in the 183-kilometer race only to yield the lap to fellow national riders Arnel Quirimit and Merculio Ramos.

"Our coach concentrated too much on Santy. He forgot that there were other riders in the team that could help Santy win the stage," said Barnachea of Bowling Gold coach Ceferino Vacunawa.

Barnachea recovered from that setback to grab second place in the individual race behind Arnel Quirimit after the team time trial yesterday. *June Navarro*

Little League race tightens

SAN PABLO CITY—It's still anybody's race in the quest for the four semifinal slots in the premier 11-12 division of the Little League championships here.

Although Cebu Province, represented by Salazar Institute, grabbed the solo lead in Group A after a 7-0 rout of Pampanga, an eligibility protest threatened to wipe out the Cebuanos' 5-0 win-loss record.

Makati City, erstwhile co-leader with Cebu, dropped to second as it bowed to Batangas, 9-5.

Tanauan City paced Group B also with a 5-0 record following its 12-2 demolition of Valenzuela City, but Bacolod-DepEd is expected to tie the Batangueños with an expected win over winless Marist of Marikina in a game still going on at presstime.

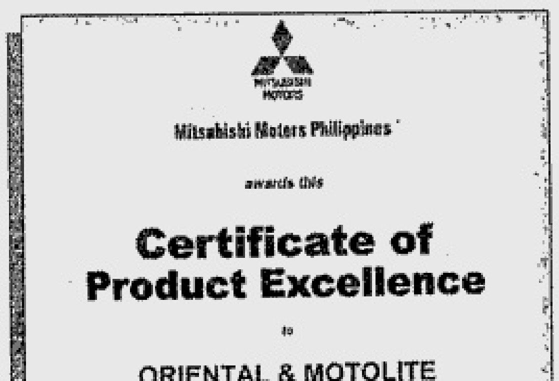
It's a toss-up between Sta. Cruz of Laguna (5-0) and Mountain Province (4-0) in Group C. Sta. Cruz outlasted Morong, Bataan, 7-6, while Mountain Province was scheduled to face Mamburao, Oriental Mindoro late yesterday.

Contesting the semis berth in Group D are ILLAM (4-1), Bulacan and Floridablanca, Pampanga, both with 3-2 slates. ILLAM routed Quezon City, 10-1, while Bulacan emerged a contender by blanking Floridablanca, 9-0.

Makati completed a four-game sweep of Group A in the boys' Junior League (13-14) after beating Marikina, 14-2, while ILLAM moved to within a game of sweeping its assignments in Group A of Senior League (14-16) with a 27-2 mangling of Bataan Province.

Earlier, Manila officially clinched the girls' softball Big League (16-18) championship without swinging a bat as Nueva Ecija defaulted the match for failing to field a nine-man lineup.

Only eight Nueva Ecija girls showed up with the rest of their teammates felled by food poisoning according to their coach Gerardo Ramirez.



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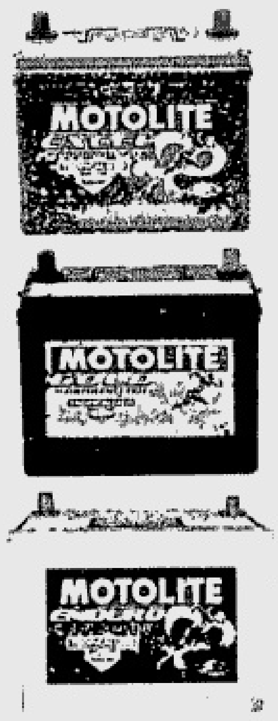

MOTOLITE receives Product Excellence Award from Mitsubishi Motors Philippines

Manila, March 21, 2003· Motolite, the number one automotive battery in the Philippines has added another feather to its cap. Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corporation (MMPC) recently awarded Motolite with a Product Excellence Award in recognition of its compliance with the Quality Standards of MMPC that resulted to the consistent delivery of high quality products. The award is a true testimony of Motolite's superior product features, performance and its compatibility to any vehicle-type.

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AT A GLANCE

NBA PLAYOFFS 2003

EASTERN CONFERENCE

(1) Detroit vs. (8) Orlando

Magic 2, Pistons 1
Game 1: Orlando 99, Detroit 94
Game 2: Detroit 89, Orlando 77
Game 3: Orlando 89, Detroit 80
Game 4 at Orlando (April 28)

(2) New Jersey vs (7) Milwaukee

Nets 2, Bucks 2
Game 1: New Jersey 109, Milwaukee 96
Game 2: Milwaukee 88, New Jersey 85
Game 3: New Jersey 103, Milwaukee 101
Game 4 Milwaukee 119, New Jersey 114
Game 5 at New Jersey (April 30)

(3) Indiana vs (6) Boston

Pacers 1, Celtics 2
Game 1: Boston 103, Indiana 100
Game 2: Indiana 89, Boston 77
Game 3: Boston 101, Indiana 83
Game 4 at Boston (April 28)

(4) Philadelphia vs (8) N. Orleans

Sixers 2, Hornets 1,
Game 1: Philadelphia 98, New Orleans 90
Game 2: Philadelphia 90, New Orleans 85
Game 3 New Orleans 99, Philadelphia 85
Game 4 at New Orleans (April 29)

WESTERN CONFERENCE

(1) San Antonio vs (8) Phoenix

Spurs 2, Suns 1
Game 1 Phoenix 96, San Antonio 95 (OT)
Game 2: San Antonio 84, Phoenix 76
Game 3: San Antonio 99, Phoenix 86
Game 4 at Phoenix (April 28)

(2) Sacramento vs (7) Utah

Kings 2, Jazz 1
Game 1: Sacramento 96, Utah 90
Game 2: Sacramento 108, Utah 95
Game 3 Utah 107, Sacramento 104
Game 4: at Utah (April 29)

(3) Dallas vs (6) Portland

Mavs 3, Blazers 0
Game 1: Dallas 96, Portland 86
Game 2: Dallas 103, Portland 99
Game 3: Dallas 115, Portland 103
Game 4 at Portland (April 28)

(4) Minnesota vs. (5) LA Lakers

Wolves 2, Lakers 1
Game 1: LA Lakers 117, Minnesota 98
Game 2: Minnesota 119, LA Lakers 91
Game 3: Minnesota 114, LA Lakers 110
Game 4 at Los Angeles (April 28)

Bucks pull even with Nets

MILWAUKEE—Toni Kukoc scored 23 points and Gary Payton had 20 points and 14 assists as the Milwaukee Bucks overcame a fourth quarter collapse to beat the New Jersey Nets 119-114 in overtime in NBA playoff action on Saturday.

The win ties the best-of-seven Eastern Conference opening round series 2-2. Game 5 is on Tuesday in East Rutherford.

The Bucks had a 14-point lead with less than seven minutes remaining in the fourth quarter but allowed the Nets to storm back to send the game into overtime.

New Jersey would have won in regulation, except for nine free throw misses in the last four minutes of the game.

The Nets comeback featured a 14-0 run late in the fourth quarter, but the Bucks survived in the final seconds and won in overtime thanks to balanced scoring from the bench.

Six Bucks scored in double-figures, with four Milwaukee players contributing at least 20 points, including Kukoc and Payton. Sam Cassell had 21 points for the Bucks, while Tim Thomas chipped in with 20.

Desmond Mason added 14 points and eight rebounds while Anthony Mason had another 10 points and six boards off the bench.

Kenyon Martin led New Jersey with 30 points, but he missed three free throws in the dying minutes as well. Richard Jefferson added 28 points for the Nets, while Lucious Harris had 19. Jason Kidd finished with 15 points, 10 assists and six rebounds for New Jersey.

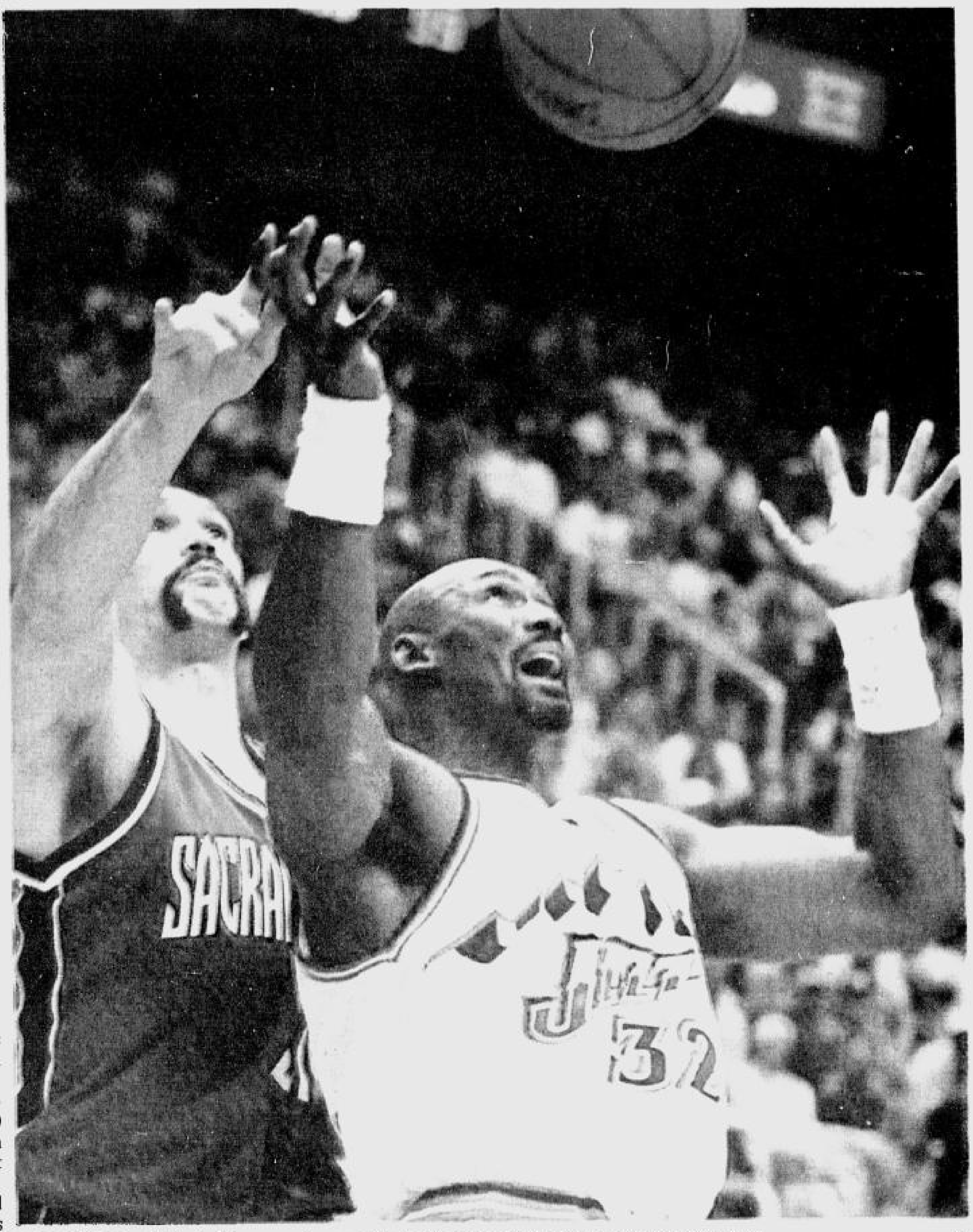
In New Orleans, Baron Davis scored 28 points as the Hornets survived the absence of leading scorer Jamal Mashburn to beat the Philadelphia 76ers 99-85.

Philadelphia still leads the best-of-seven series 2-1, with Game 4 on Monday in New Orleans.

Jamaal Magloire added 18 points and nine rebounds for the Hornets, as Mashburn watched the game with a chipped bone in his right middle finger.

P.J. Brown added 17 points and 12 rebounds, while Jerome Moiso scored all 10 of his points in the fourth quarter. Allen Iverson scored 28 points for the Sixers, but just eight came in the second half.

Keith Van Horn, Kenny Thomas and Derrick Coleman all scored 12 points for Philadelphia. *AP*



BLOCKED: Scot Pollard of Sacramento swats the battle away to foil a shot by Utah's Karl Malone. AFP

Kobe, Shaq get their act together

EL SEGUNDO, California— Shaq and Kobe had a little confab Saturday — an informal summit that might help turn things around for the Los Angeles Lakers.

Kobe Bryant said his chat with Shaquille O'Neal involved what the Lakers need to do to be successful in the team's first-round playoff series against the Minnesota Timberwolves.

The Timberwolves, who have never advanced past the first round, lead the three-time defending NBA champions 2-1 entering Game 4 in the best-of-seven series Sunday afternoon at Staples Center.

"He and I got together and we talked about the serious nature of these playoffs and how challenging it's going to be, what we need to do to help us advance," Bryant said. "And he kind of has to take this team and lead this team. He's just going to come out and play Shaquille O'Neal basketball, he's going to be aggressive and he's going to help us get a win.

"It wasn't a sit-down, we shot around together. I went up to him and just started talking about it and that was it. Basketball stuff, strategy, how to get these other guys more involved, how to get him the ball on the move and some things defensively."

Bryant and O'Neal, one of the top offensive tandems in NBA history, are averaging 32 and 29 points, respectively, through the first three games.

That's close to what they averaged during the season, but Bryant is shooting 40.7 percent and O'Neal 50 percent — well below their norms.

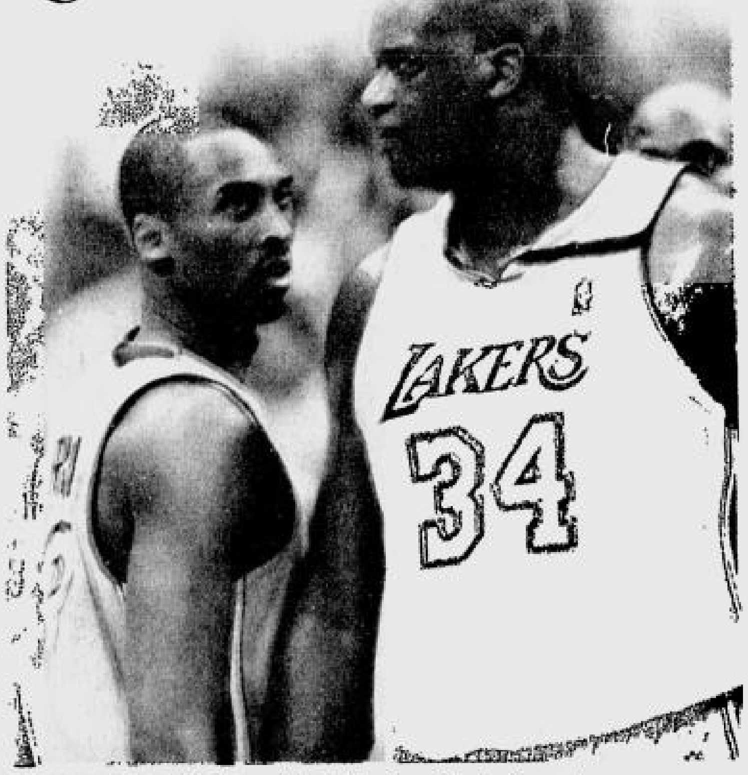
Bryant shot 10-of-28 and O'Neal 10-of-26 in Minnesota's 114-110 overtime victory in Game 3.

"Any team that we play is going to play way above their heads," O'Neal said. "They're playing with the attitude that they've got nothing to lose."

The Timberwolves are shooting 50.6 percent, the Lakers 43.1 percent.

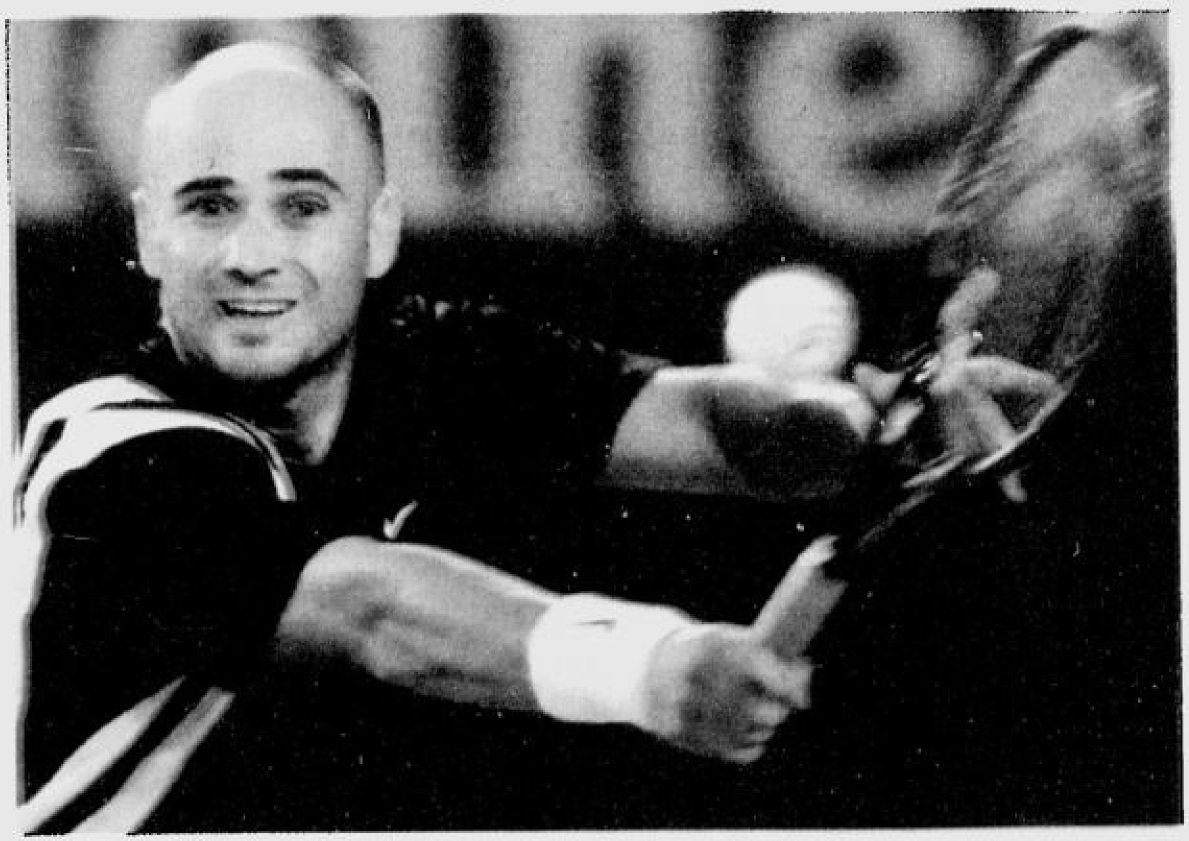
"This is nothing that we've never seen before," O'Neal said. "It's not what they're doing, it's what we're not doing. We just have to pick it up. It's all about us."

Lakers coach Phil Jackson said his team has to make Minnesota pay for double-teaming Bryant and O'Neal, and that means players such as Robert Horry and Rick Fox, who haven't shot often or with great effectiveness, need to contribute more.



LAKER SUMMIT: Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant

At 32, Agassi is oldest at No. 1



NUMBER ONE: Andre Agassi delivers a backhand in a form that earned him the world No. 1 ranking at age 32.

HOUSTON, Texas—Andre Agassi became the oldest player to top the world rankings after crushing Jurgen Melzer to reach the final of the U.S. Clay Court Championships on Saturday.

The 32-year-old Agassi continued the form that has brought him 22 victories in 23 matches this year, overwhelming Austrian Melzer 6-4 6-1 to set up a final clash with fellow American Andy Roddick.

"I don't think that I can quite find the words," Agassi said. "It's an amazing feeling because it's the result of a lot of hard work and a lot of determination, and a lot of decision making, a lot of success in many different arenas against many different opponents.

"It's a bit overwhelming to have it all come together at one moment." Agassi, winner of eight Grand Slam titles, first topped the rankings in 1995.

He replaces Australian Lleyton Hewitt as the world's top-ranked player, a position he last held in September 2000.

"It starts to sink in earlier and earlier the older you get, you are sort of more aware of the fewer opportunities, you're surely more appreciative of the accomplishments," Agassi said.

Agassi, the 1992 Wimbledon champion, slumped to No. 141 in the rankings in 1997 following a dramatic slump in form but recovered to climb to number six by the end of 1998.

He won the 1999 French and U.S. Open titles, becoming only the fifth man in history to win all four grand slams when he triumphed at Roland Garros, and has been Australian Open champion three times in the past four years

Davenport weds banker

LOS ANGELES—United States Tennis star Lindsay Davenport has married an investment banker and former college player whose brother briefly coached the three-time Grand Slam singles champion.

Davenport, 26, and Jonathan Leach, 30, were married Friday on a beach in Hawaii, with friends and family present, agent Tony Godsick said. It is the first marriage for both.

Both Leach and his brother, Rick Leach, were All-American tennis players at the University of Southern California, where their father, Dick Leach, coached until last year.

LINDSAY and husband Jonathan Leach.

Tarver punches way to 2 titles

MASHANTUCKET, Connecticut—Antonio Tarver overwhelmed former champion Montell Griffin here Saturday to capture a unanimous decision and win two of the world light-heavyweight titles surrendered by Roy Jones.

Tarver won every round in the eyes of all three judges, who each gave Tarver a 120-106 decision. Tarver rose to 21-1 with his fifth triumph in a row and snapped the six-fight win streak of Griffin, who fell to 44-4.

Tarver captured the International Boxing Federation and World Boxing Council titles vacated by Jones when he elected to drop his undisputed crown and keep the World Boxing Association heavyweight title he won from John Ruiz.

"I'm ready for whoever, however and whatever," Tarver said. "Antonio Tarver is here and I'm here to stay." Southpaw Tarver knocked Griffin to the canvas for the second time with a stunning left to the chest with 20 seconds remaining in the final round. Griffin rose to reach the final bell but was dominated from start to finish.

"If I had got him more right on the kisser, he could have been out before the end of the 12th round," Tarver said. "Montell Griffin is a great champion. I'm just glad I wanted this as badly as he did." Tarver, a 1996 Olympic bronze medalist, suffered his only loss to Eric Harding in 2000. Tarver avenged that defeat by stopping his fellow American in the fifth round last July as easily as he shrugged off Griffin's pre-fight taunts.

"That was all the motivation I needed. I have never been a quitter," said Tarver. "There's nothing any man can do to stop me if I put my mind to it."

AFP

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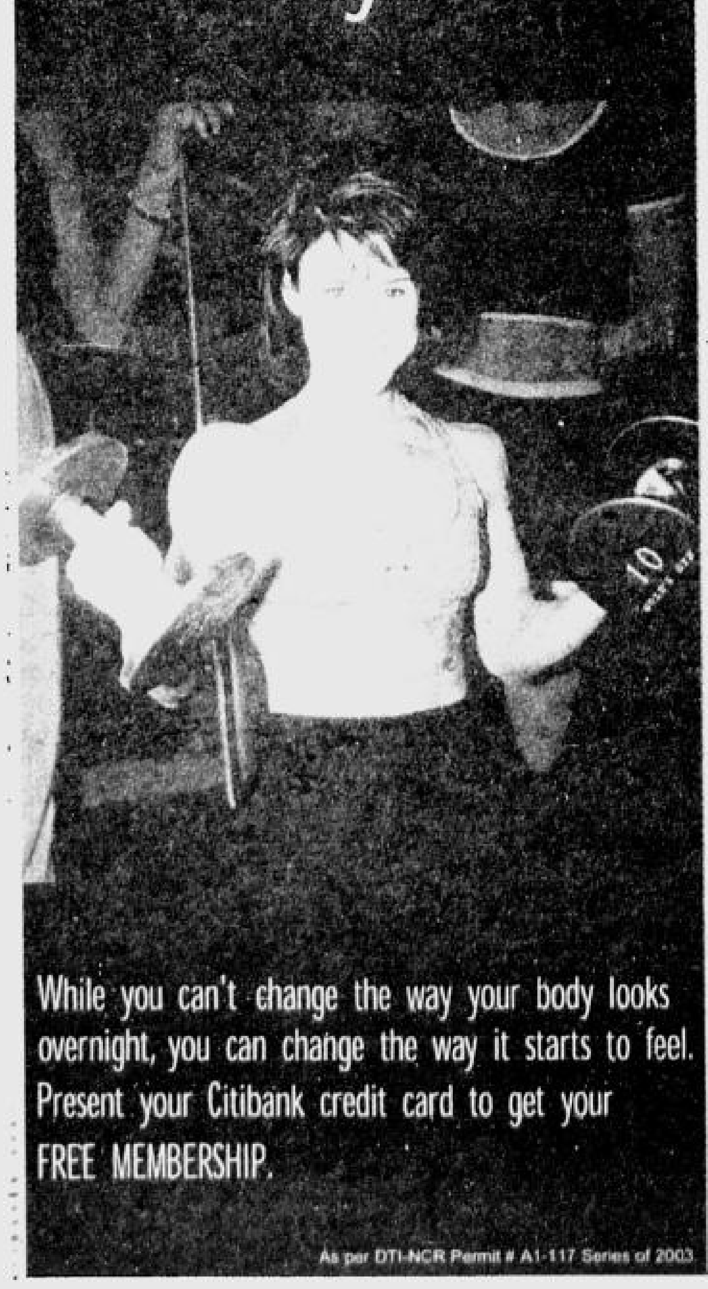

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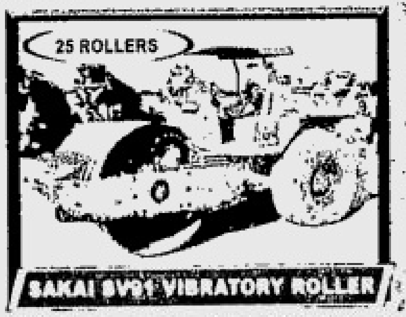

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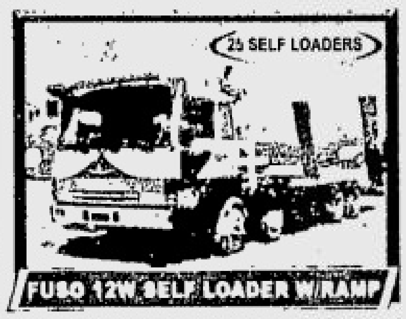

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BODYBUILDING UPSET

Pint-sized gym trainer is Mr. RP

RANGED against taller and heftier musclemen, a gym instructor of Makati's Pacific Plaza pulled off the biggest upset of his career to become this year's Mr. Philippines during the national bodybuilding championship at Greenhills in San Juan on Saturday night.

Armed with awesome abdominals and delts, Dondon Cortuna, 28, bested 46 other ironmen and six division titleholders of the Philippine Bodybuilding Federation (PBBF) to grab the overall plum in his only second bid for the national crown.

The diminutive Cebu City native, flexing well-defined shoulders and body cut as bantamweight defending champion, stunned early favorite Albert Cuesta of Quezon City whose awesome body mass wowed a jam-packed crowd at Greenhills' Music Museum.

The 31-year-old Cuesta, a personal trainer of Oz Gym, emerged as the tournament's top pick when he bested comebacking four-time national champion Alfredo Cornel in the fight for welterweight top honors.

Cortuna engaged Cuesta in a do-or-die battle during the execution of the seven mandatory poses and one-minute individual posing routine.

Cortuna gained an outright berth to join this year's six division winners in the finals following his victory in the bantamweight class in last year's edition of the contest at the Benguet State University in La Trinidad, Benguet.

Despite winning then, however, his size failed to impress the judges who eventually declared Quezon City's Jay Catli as overall champion.

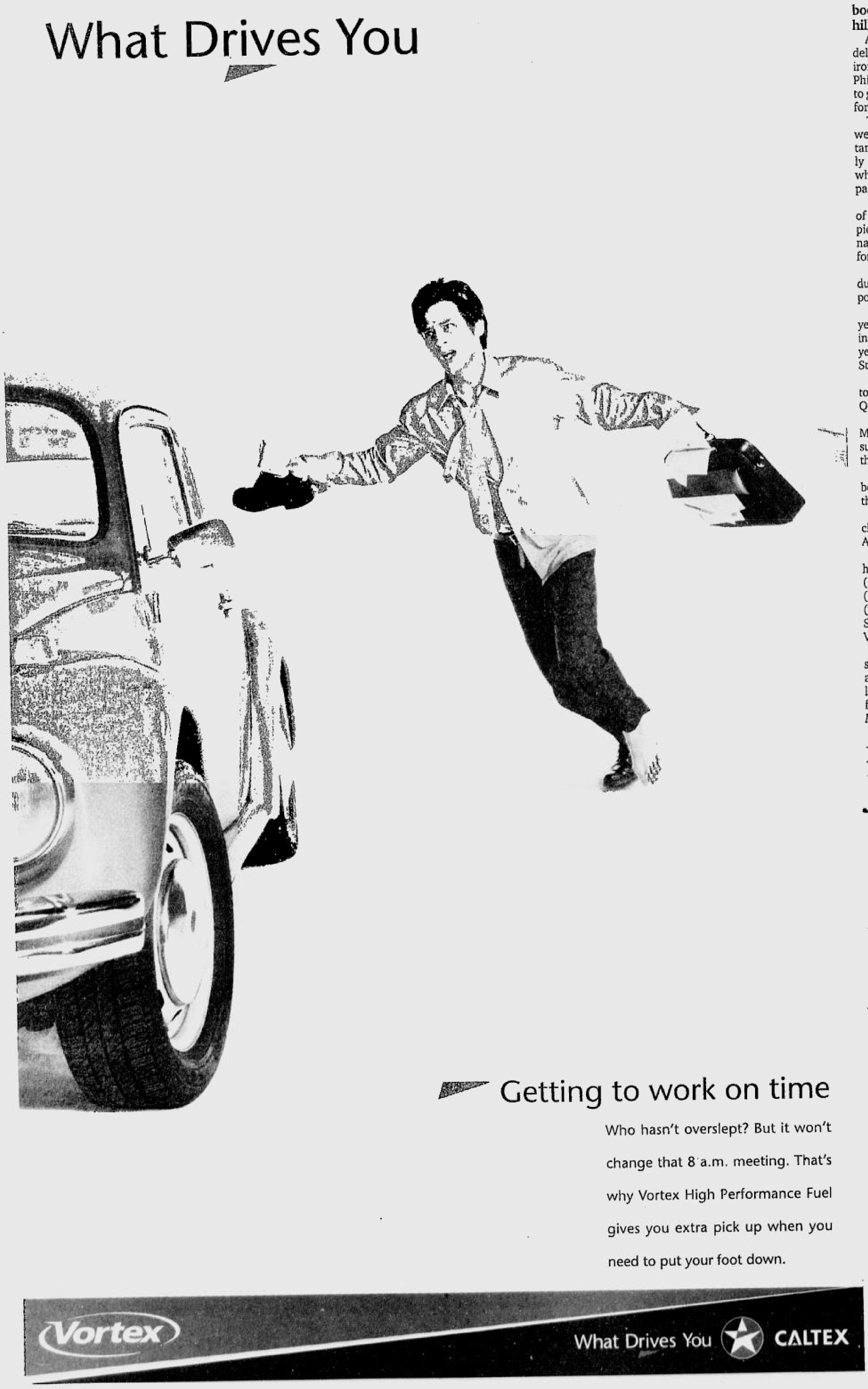
Catli, however, was disqualified to defend his Mr. Philippines crown this year since he failed to submit himself for dope testing as mandated by the International Olympic Committee.

"I owe my title to God. I think he pitied me because I really watched my diet for almost three months," Cortuna told the INQUIRER.

Cortuna will now banner the national muscle team that will compete in the Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam this December.

Joining him will be the other division titleholders: Fernando Faroden of Baguio City (flyweight), Jose Gerardo of Lipa City (lightweight), Albert Cuesta of Quezon City (welterweight), Raque Agaton of Northern Samar (light middleweight) and Armando Villasoto of Iloilo City (middleweight).

Meanwhile, PBBF president Luciano Lim said Saturday's winners would have to hurdle a dope test before they would be formally allowed to join the national team's preparations for the SEA Games. *Delmar Carino, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



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PBL IN BACOLOD

Juicers crash back to earth

BACOLOD CITY—With main man Nelbert Omolon handcuffed by his longtime friend, Nutri-licious failed against the ICTSI-Archers, 64-53, yesterday in the Sunkist-PBL Unity Cup at the West Negros College Gym here.

A day after erupting with a career-high 36 points in the Juicers' 88-85 double overtime win over Hapee at the Cebu Coliseum, Omolon crashed back to earth, unable to shake off the defense put up by buddy Bernzon Franco.

"I wanted to stop him. We've played together for four years in the NCAA and I knew his strong points," said the 6-foot-4 Franco, who finished with two points and 12 rebounds.

Omolon, also 6-foot-4, groped for form throughout against Franco, who used his wide frame to outmaneuver his Philippine Christian University teammate.

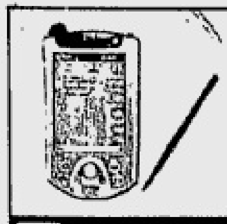
Omolon scattered 14 points, some of them garbage points, as the Juicers fell to 3-5. Chico Lanete and Ervin Sotto also played shakily as they combined for 15 points for the Juicers.

ICTSI improved to 4-5 in the NCR division. The Archers came to the game determined to solve their end-game collapses.

Despite leading most of the way, ICTSI bowed to Hapee, Viva and Blu Star in this conference.

"But I'm not going to blame those losses on fourth-quarter collapses. It was more of mental lapses on our part. Our composure did not waver against Nutri-licious," said ICTSI mentor Franz Pumaren.

Later, Peter June Simon made the winning basket as Hapee snapped Viva's five-game winning streak, 64-62. The win improved Hapee's mark to 7-2, good enough for the first semifinals slot. Viva dropped to 5-4.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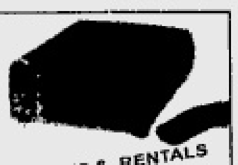
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Gov't downplays SARS impact on economy

By Michelle V. Remo

ECONOMIC Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said he remained optimistic the SARS scare haunting the region would not impact much on the local economy despite the weekend announcement that the country was no longer SARS-free.

Neri, who is also director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, said in an interview that the government need not revise its growth targets for the year as proposed by some officials due to the perceived economic effects of the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak.

He said that since the panic over SARS was still much less compared to other countries, he saw no reason for revisions.

He added that the only sector that could be affected so far by SARS was tourism, but noted that it was only a small fraction of the country's gross domestic product or GDP.

"Tourism is not as big a component of our GDP unlike in other countries, such as Thailand, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia," Neri said.

He noted that the Philippines only had a million tourists a year, compared with about 12 million in Thailand, 10 million in Hong Kong, 6 million in Malaysia, 3 million in Singapore and 4 million in Indonesia.

Neri also said the current slowdown in the country's tourism industry, which he estimated at about 7 percent, would eventually be offset by a growth in domestic tourism.

"Our local tourists who could have otherwise gone abroad pre-

GOV'T/ B3

A SALES clerk displays a face mask to a customer near a government hospital on Saturday. Face masks have been flying off the shelves due to the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome epidemic which has killed two people and infected two others in the Philippines. AFP

INDICATORS

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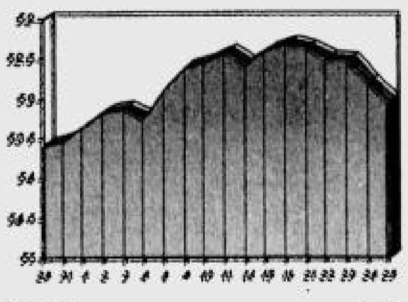

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As of 5 p.m., April 25, 2003

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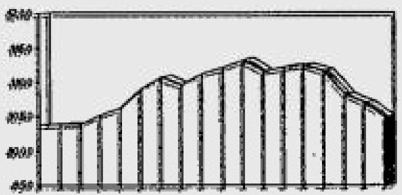
STOCK MARKET

Bearish sentiment seen this week

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B6)

AFTER taking a beating last week, the stock market is expected to remain bearish with possible consolidation this week.

The budget deficit, the subsequent downgrade of Philippine sovereign ratings by Standard & Poor's and the government's confirmation of the presence of the dreaded Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) virus are all seen to weigh heavily on the market.

The Philippine Stock Exchange's main index closed at 1,049.39 points last week, the lowest finish since the beginning of the month.

"The market is so cheap but the SARS and the downgrade have affected it," former PSE chair Vivian Yuchengco of First Resources noted.

She said that the Philippine market would have to rely on itself because foreign investment is scarce. However, it is hoped that the country will get more business as foreign investors look for other options aside from China, the country worst hit by SARS.

Jose Vistan of AB Capital noted that the market's recovery would have to wait a little longer as new concerns apparently have kept propping up one after the other.

"For the coming sessions, the market may consolidate following the steep drop in share price last week. The market might be range-bound although the bias remains bearish," he said. "Investors will also wait for more corporate earnings results and more economic data."

Abroad, Vistan noted, the market would have to concern itself over North Korea and its threat of using its nuclear weapons.

BEARISH/ B6

5% GROSS RECEIPTS TAX

Gov't willing to replace VAT on professionals

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance is willing to drop the controversial 10-percent value-added tax (VAT) on professionals and replace it with a 5-percent gross receipts tax (GRT).

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said that if the professionals, who were vehemently opposing the VAT, would insist on a level playing field, the 5-percent GRT could be the only alternative.

Camacho stressed that the DOF would never support the deferral of the VAT, a measure which is expected to raise P8.6 billion in additional revenues a year for the government.

However, he said the only tradeoff the DOF would accept would be the replacement of the VAT with the GRT.

Finance Undersecretary Cornelio Gison said the DOF had yet to quantify the revenue impact of replacing the VAT on professionals with a GRT. He added that the initial response among professionals on the possible substitution was negative.

"Some professionals would rather pay the 10-percent VAT because they can deduct their input VAT. If they pass it on to their clients, they can claim it as tax credit," Gison said.

The 10-percent VAT on professionals took effect early this month with the issuance of a new revenue regulation from the Bureau of Internal Revenue, with a retroactive effect starting January this year. The 10-percent VAT was also slapped on banks and financial institutions effective yesterday with the same retroactive effect.

The DOF is also strongly opposing a bill filed in the Lower House seeking to defer the imposition of the VAT on both financial institutions and professionals for two years. The bill is now on third reading in Congress.

The only compromise that the DOF would be willing to accept, Camacho said, would be the permanent replacement of the VAT on banks by the GRT.

The Finance chief noted that the GRT on banks would be easier to implement and have the potential to increase the revenue collection of the government.

He is banking on the Senate to modify the bill in favor of the DOF's position.

Camacho said he would also propose to Malacañang to certify as urgent the bill restoring the GRT.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has supported the restoration of the GRT in lieu of the VAT, noting that the latter would curb the growth of consumer loans.

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Gov't finalizes takeover of Subic power facility

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT has finalized its takeover of the Subic Power Plant, a 108-megawatt bunker-fired diesel plant put up by cash-strapped Enron Corp., as part of its rationalization of costly independent power producer (IPP) contracts.

Documents from the Department of Finance and the National Economic and Development Authority also showed that the government, through the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM), had finalized the renegotiation with Mirant (Philippines) Corp. for the Sual and Pagbilao IPPs.

In the case of Enron's Subic Plant, the inter-agency Investment Coordination Committee had cleared the way for an early transfer agreement (ETA) on March 13.

In a recent memorandum signed by Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, who co-shairs the ICC, affirmed that the ETA was in compliance with the Electric Power Industry Reform Act.

Neri also said the ETA "does not involve an increase in the amount or a change in the form of government undertakings or ICC-prescribed parameters or contractual provisions."

The documents, however, did not indicate the transfer price under the ETA.

Enron proposed the early transfer of the plant, which it was supposed to operate for 15 years or until March 2009, in order to reduce the payment obligations and enable National Power Corp. to immediately sell the Subic Power Plant. Under the deal, NPC's payment obligations will be reduced under the build-operate-and-transfer agreement.

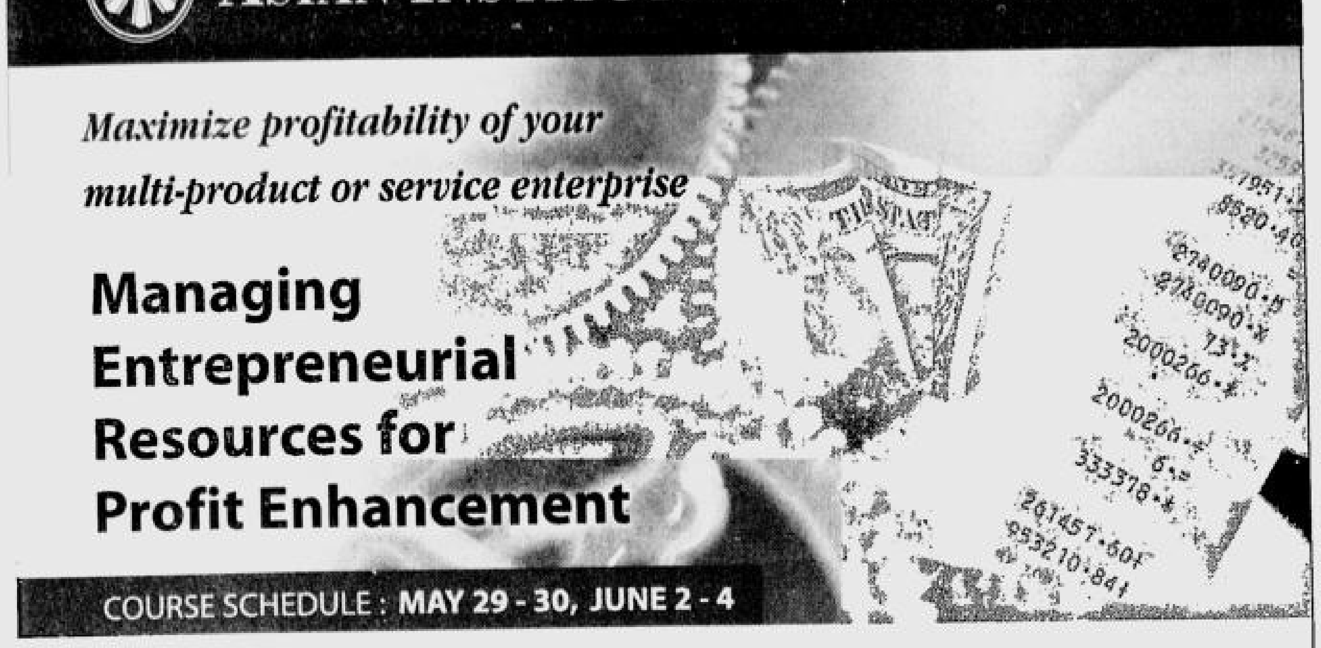
PSALM, the entity which took over Napocor's assets and liabilities, is supposed to review all related contracts with regard to the assignment of rights.

In an interview on Saturday, Neri clarified that the takeover should not create an impression that the government was out there to buy out all IPPs, which would run against its privatization policy.

"If the IPP is too expensive, it will be cheaper for the government to simply buy out the contract if it cannot be renegotiated," he said.

The Subic Power Plant was included in the IPP review because it was underutilized.

The government also concluded the renegotiation of the IPP terms for the 1,000-MW Sual coal-fired thermal plant and the 700-MW Pagbilao coal-dired thermal power plant of Mirant.



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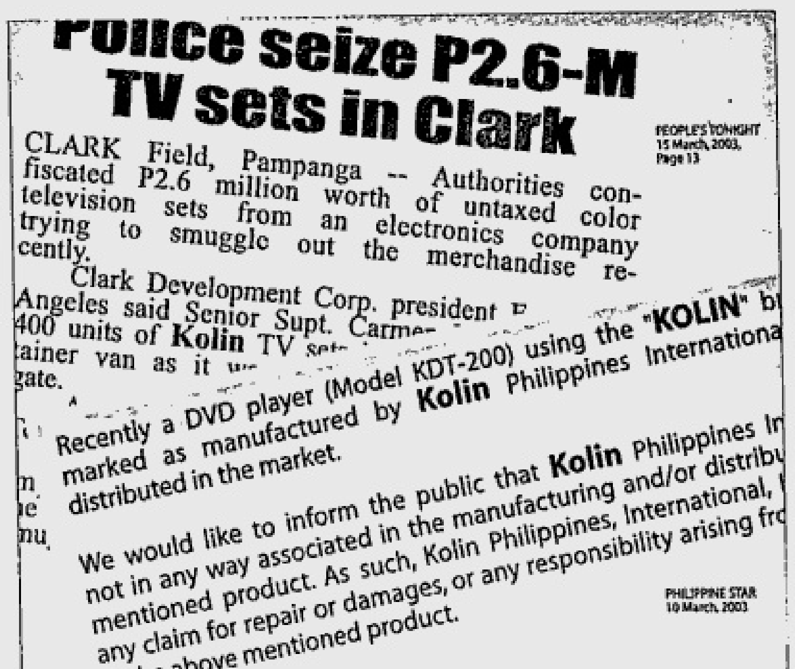

Police seize P2.6-M TV sets in Clark

PEOPLE'S TONIGHT 15 March, 2003, Page 13

CLARK Field, Pampanga -- Authorities confiscated P2.6 million worth of untaxed color television sets from an electronics company trying to smuggle out the merchandise recently.

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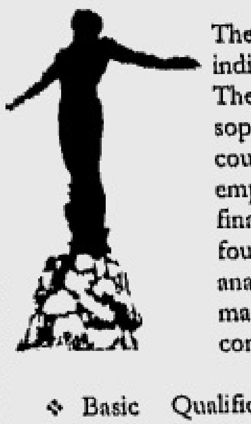

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InSECurities

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE FOUR female commissioners of the Securities and Exchange Commission, led by Chair Lilia Bautista, have been lobbying Malacañang for the transfer of their lone male colleague, Jesus Martinez.

Martinez, who has been a lone dissenting voice in the supposedly collegial body, earned the ire of the four women, according to the grapevine, especially after he furnished Congress documents about the P162-million SEC computerization project.

Parallel to the congressional investigation, a group of SEC employees have also filed a pesky complaint with the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission that the four female SEC commissioners now have to answer to.

It also did not help that Martinez, a nominee of Bro. Eddie Villanueva, took the same side as constitutional expert Fr. Joaquin Bernas questioning the pre-selection of candidates at the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Martinez, for his part, is now the subject of a complaint questioning the legality of his appointment less than a year after the last elections. Martinez, who himself was not a candidate, was nevertheless a party-list nominee of Cibac.

Depending on whom you talk to, to wash him out of the females' hairs, Martinez was supposedly being offered or is asking for the chairmanship of the Insurance Commission, whose longtime head Eduardo Malinis, is due to retire by the latter part of the year when his term expires.

Asian offensive

BANKER Evelyn Singson was removed from the chairmanship of the Asian Hospital Inc. after she was discovered to have awarded three service contracts to companies where she is a significant shareholder, according to an Asian Hospital official.

"We would have preferred to keep these distasteful data kept within the confines of the boardroom but if Ms Singson keeps on her negative publicity campaign against the present management, she would leave us no choice but to disclose these embarrassing information to protect the integrity and viability of the hospital," the official said.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said there had been a "gentlemen's agreement" with Singson providing her with a graceful exit in the last shareholders' meeting, a script Singson allegedly did not follow.

Singson has since filed a civil case questioning her removal from the Asian Hospital board.

Mastercard vs Visa

MASTERCARD, for years toiling under the shadow of market leader Visa, seems to be nosing out the competition not only worldwide but also in the Philippines.

Mastercard is now the preferred credit card of choice among appliance/computer shops in Makati, with credit purchases made through the card issuer treated as cash payment and, therefore, not levied a surcharge unlike credit card purchases made through Visa.

At the Price Club, the US warehouse chain has stopped accepting Visa because of an unresolved billing dispute, according to frequent shoppers.

Graham gets cracking again

AFTER an absence of a few years along with millions of investors' money, Australian Kenneth Graham is back in Manila, this time to raise capital from the expatriate community for a hotel project in Shanghai.

This should be welcome news to Iloilo Rep. Augusto Syjuco, since his elderly mother has been trying to collect P20 million in back rentals plus interests on the family's Mabuhay hotel, the Ermita property which Graham had leased and run as Sundowner Hotel.

After the sun set on the Sundowner venture, Graham and his other Aussie partners next organized an Internet company, Asia-World Online Inc. (AWOL), whose start-up capital raised from fellow expats and a sprinkling of Filipinos seems to have been sucked into the financial blackhole of AWOL's British Virgin Islands domicile.

Heard through the grapevine

DESPITE the SARS scare, Asiana Airlines is planning to start a thrice-a-week service to Clark from Seoul by late next month, in addition to its present daily flights to Manila.

There is apparently a substantial Korean community, mainly students, in Baguio that the Korean airline wants to tap.

In addition, Clark and Subic have lately become popular destinations among Korean golfers and tourists.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Gov't downplays SARS ...

From page B1

fer to stay here instead of going to Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand or China. In fact, our local resorts are the ones fully booked now," he said.

His assessment was consistent with the latest study released by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, which said the regional panic over the SARS outbreak would weigh down on local tourism, but it would somehow be offset by the slowdown in foreign exchange outflow from spending for overseas travel.

Neri estimated that the growth slowdown in local tourism, which contributes 4 percent of GDP, would affect the country's growth by only about 0.1 or 0.2 percent.

"I don't see a need to revise our growth targets yet. Besides, the worst-case scenario brought about by effects of the Middle East war did not happen. Prices of oil even went down to $22 per barrel instead of the predicted $31," he said.

Napocor to auction coal supply deals

By Ronnel W. Domingo

STATE-OWNED National Power Corp. said it would auction off a third batch of coal supply contracts worth P1.2 billion on May 23 after it secured four contracts worth a total of P2.4 billion in March.

Napocor documents showed that the approved budget for the two additional contracts were $11,510,525 (about P610 million at $1:P53) and $11,833,250 (about P627 million) or a total of about P1.3 billion.

The first contract is for the supply needs of the 1,200-megawatt Sual plant in Pangasinan while the second is for the 600-MW Masinloc plant in Zambales.

Each contract commits the winning bidder to deliver several shipments totaling 325,000 metric tons of coal.

In March, Napocor started a series of auctions with four contracts costing a total of about $43.5 million or P2.4 billion.

Of the four contracts, two were for 650,000 metric tons intended for the Sual plant and the other two were for the same volume of fuel for the Masinloc plant.

Napocor is also expected to bid out contracts for the fuel supply needs of the Pagbilao plant in Quezon and the Naga plant in Cebu.

The company is tasked to secure supplies not only for the coal-fired plants it owns but also for plants under build-operate-transfer contracts like the ones in Sual and Pagbilao.

The power firm is set to offer a total of at least eight contracts to cover its coal supply needs up to May 2004, which is pegged at 3.13 million metric tons.

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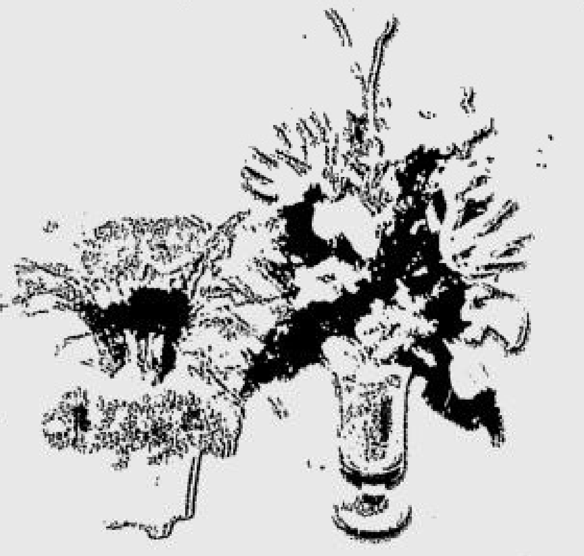

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Gov't seen writing off NSC debts worth ₱2B

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG has endorsed the write-off of nearly P2 billion in taxes and duties, transfer fees and power bills owed by National Steel Corp. (NSC) to fast-track the entry of new investors into the shuttered, Iligan-based steel manufacturer.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said the President approved his recommendation to defer the payment of P808 million in back duties to the Bureau of Customs; P300 million owed to the National Power Corp. and P150 million in prospective taxes related to the transfer of the steel company to a special purpose asset vehicle (SPAV) that would hold NSC's assets and facilitate its sale.

Roxas said the President had also appealed to local government officials of Iligan City to either defer or condone the P681 million in unpaid real estate taxes of NSC.

"Iligan City will be the biggest beneficiary of NSC's reopening because of the jobs it would generate and the spark in economic activity it would create," Roxas said.

He stressed that the government's main interest in writing off these dues was the quick reopening of NSC, which has been closed since November 1999 due to mounting losses arising from stiff

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May 8

I. Entrepreneurship: Building Financial and Personal Freedom for the Filipino Families

8:30-8:50 a.m.
A Proactive Call for Entrepreneurship
Dr. Michael Alba, Dean,
College of Business and Economics, DLSU

8:50-9:10 a.m.
Direct Selling Industry Overview
Louie Migne, Secretary General, DSAP

9:10-10:10 a.m.
Why Direct Sales and Network Marketing is the Better Choice
Roy Yu, Director of Sales, Avon Cosmetics, Inc.

10:30-12:00 nn
How to Handle Your Finances
Rene Hapitan, Coordinator for Master of Science in Financial Engineering
College of Business and Economics, DLSU

Manuel Recto, Chief Finance Officer
Sara Lee Direct Selling-Phils.

II. Starting Your Distributor Business: A Self-Assessment

1:30-3:30 p.m.
Vision, Mission, Goals and Values
Emil Quinto, Managing Director
Nikken Phils., Inc.

III. Growing Your Distributor Business: Continuous Business and Relationship Building Efforts

4:00-5:00 p.m.
Sales Strategies and Techniques
Dr. Leonardo Garcia
Director, CBE Graduate Studies, DLSU
President, Phil. Marketing Association

May 9

8:30-9:30 a.m.
People Skills
Carlos Maglutac, Lecturer, Marketing Dept., DLSU
Director, Sales and Marketing, Pilmap Travel and Leisure Magazine

9:30-10:30 a.m.
Recruiting Skills
Josie Medina, International Field Vice-President
Symmetry Phils., Inc.

11:00-12:00 nn
Selling Skills
Rikard Rosen, Managing Director
Lux Marketing, Inc.

IV. Sustaining Your Distributorship Business Volume: Lessons from Direct Selling Warriors

1:30-3:00 p.m.
Leadership Skills
Eric Lee, Diamond Direct,
Amway Phils., L.L.C.

Marivic Go, Distributor, Tupperware Phils., Inc.

3:30-5:00 p.m.
Growing Your Business
Christina Boyd, Independent Executive Sales Director, Mary Kay Phils., Inc.

Criselda Medalla, Diamond Executive
Nu Skin Phils., Inc.

5:00-6:00 p.m.
Choosing the Right Products and Legitimate Network Marketing Company
Josiah Go, Author, "The Direct Selling Entrepreneurial Mindset"
President and General Manager, Waters Philippines

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SSS shakier than ever

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

FASTEN your seat belts, fellow members, the SSS is in a much deeper hole than I thought. Don't take my word for it. Listen to what the SSS media affairs unit wrote in a letter ran recently in the Letters section. The letter was in response to my Feb. 17 column, "SSS: Where Will the Money Go."

My column dealt with the newly approved additional contribution, which is being paid entirely by the employers. Will the new money increase the members' benefits? No, because the new money will not be even enough to cover the losses.

The SSS letter said that the new money would not be used to cover losses, but to correct fund imbalances. Fund imbalance is just another accounting gobbledygook meaning expenses exceed income. In short, a loss. So, the letter admits that the new money will be used to cover losses.

I claimed in my column that the SSS is bankrupt, because income is not enough to cover outgo. To make up for the shortfall, the SSS have had to "borrow" from the Employees Compensation Fund, also managed by the SSS.

This borrowing is illegal. I guess the new money will be used to pay back these borrowings.

The letter said the SSS is not bankrupt. It boasts of assets, as of end of 2002, of P162.6 billion (actually, the official figure is P164.4 billion). So, let us take a close look at the official figure.

First, total assets at the end of the previous year stood at P181.7 billion. The SSS wrote off P17.3 billion of these assets. But, what about the liabilities? In the SSS, as in any insurance operation, the liabilities are fixed, regardless of the assets. Relentlessly and inexorably, members will continue to die, get sick or disabled, and grow old. How will these benefits be paid if the total assets have been cut by P17.3 billion?

Second, the 2002 assets of P164.4 billion is infested with "unrealized losses," another accounting gobbledygook, which used to be called "paper losses." Investments in mass housing total P40 billion, 75 percent of which, or a cool P30 billion is long past due. Small loans—tuition, calamity, salary—of P5,000 to P10,000 each come up to P30 billion.

The repayment rate is so low, and the SSS can no longer trace the borrowers.

Then, there is the investments in real estate, mostly condominium units, where the losses, albeit unrealized, run up to tens of billions of pesos. Finally, there is the severe drop in the market values of the investments in stocks.

So, more than one-half of the total assets are not worth the paper they are written on.

Also, I guess the investment income includes interest earnings on these past due and non-performing loans.

The SSS law limits overhead expenses to 12 percent of contributions plus 3 percent of investment income. In my column, I said that this limit was breached by P400 million. The SSS now claims that the excess was only P89 million. This amount is still illegal. There is no such thing as a little bit of rape.

My column also called for the removal of the staff of the commissioners. In the private sector, even in San Miguel or Ayala, directors do not have any staff. The corporate secretary takes care of the directors' needs. The SSS claims this is unrealistic because of the quasi-judicial functions of the commissioners. I don't buy this line.

The large number of employees at the corporate secretary's office should be able to provide the staff work of the quasi-judges. Besides, why should a part-time commissioner have a bigger staff than a full-time Regional Trial Court judge?

But, above all, the SSS letter confirmed what I said in my column: the members, especially the retirees, will not share in the new money put in by employers (the SSS claims it will be P4 billion a year). The SSS is in a deeper hole than I thought.

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NISSAN

Congress urged to OK renewable energy measure

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE NATIONAL Power Corp., whose functions would be focused on servicing remote communities after the privatization of its power plants, urged Congress to pass a bill supporting the development of new and renewable energy (NREs) resources.

House Bill No. 5571 or the proposed Renewable Energy Act seeks to promote the use of non-conventional sources of energy such as wind, solar, ocean, biomass and hybrid power system. The bill also promotes private sector support for the commercialization of such projects.

Dennis Gana, Napocor's corporate communications manager, said in an interview that the agency was espousing the Department of Energy's policy of giving priority to NREs to achieve total electrification for the country.

"Efforts are being made specifically to promote NREs in remote islands and barangays to fulfill Napocor's mandate for missionary electrification," Gana said.

The official also said the promotion of NREs went along with efforts to reduce the country's dependence on imported fuel.

"Napocor has gained a headway in lowering its dependence on imported fossil fuel to just about 10 percent of its needs from over 50 percent four years ago," Gana said.

He explained that through the proposed law, NREs would be integrated to the country's main power systems by requiring power generators to devote a certain part of their output to renewable energy systems.

The bill also proposed grants of price rebates through "green pricing" programs for those who use NREs.

Gana said that in recent years, Napocor had partnered with private firms on the development of more hydro, mini-hydro and geothermal power projects.

Napocor urges Congress to formalize incentives and policies governing NREs by passing the law, he said.

Among the incentives meant for private sector participants are unregulated tariff, income tax holiday, tax- and duty-free importation of equipment, tax credit on locally sourced equipment, and exemptions from value-added and real estate taxes.

Company data show that its current missionary electrification projects are limited to those using solar energy, all of which are initiated and funded by the government.

BOC urged to confiscate used car imports in Subic

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE BUREAU of Customs should confiscate all imports of used cars, sports utility vehicles and passenger vans that are wheeled out of the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, according to the Department of Trade and Industry.

In a letter to Customs Commissioner Antonio M. Bernardo, Trade and Industry Undersecretary Adrian S. Cristobal Jr. said these Subic imports should not be processed for payment of customs duties and taxes but subjected to seizure as provided by EO 156, a presidential directive imposing a ban on the import of used vehicles into the country.

Cristobal said EO 156 remained in effect in the Philippine Customs territory even though the Motor Vehicle Importers Association of Subic Bay Freeport Inc. represented by Eduardo Barretto obtained an injunction order from the Olongapo City Regional Trial Court last March 5 deferring the implementation of the import ban.

Cristobal opined that the injunction referred to the possible violation of the Republic Act No. 7227, which allows the free flow of goods within the Subic Freeport. The DTI stressed that Subic's free flow of trade would continue because the ban only covered a specific product (used vehicle imports) that was prohibited from entering the country.

The DTI has pushed for a ban on used vehicle imports to protect the local assembly industry whose sales have been affected by the entry of second-hand, right-hand-drive vehicles into the market.

The Office of the Solicitor General has already filed a motion to lift the court injunction as it noted that the Subic importers failed to establish the requirements needed to obtain a restraining order.

The OSG maintained that as a mere association of importers of used motor vehicles based at the Subic Special Economic Zone, it has no material right or interest in the case such that it would sustain direct injury as a result of the governmental act that is being challenged. The OSG also noted that the Olongapo RTC has no jurisdiction to interfere with the acts of the Executive Secretary, Finance Secretary, Land Transportation Office chief, and Bureau of Customs Commissioner. "Whatever writ or process the honorable court may issue is enforceable only within its territorial jurisdiction; it cannot be implemented in Metro Manila where the respondents hold office," the OSG said.

Unlike the used vehicle importers, the OSG said that the local motor vehicle industry contributes significantly to the country's economic output, employment, investment, exports, and the development of small and medium scale parts and components with its multi-billion-peso investments in plants and the thousands of jobs it created.

Proposed vehicle tax scheme seen to encourage CBU importations

MOST local vehicle assemblers are likely to import rather than export completely built-up (CBU) vehicles under the proposed tax reforms in the automotive industry that would abolish tax perks enjoyed by Asian utility vehicles.

Fair Trade Alliance co-convenor Rene Ofreneo, dean of the UP School of Labor and Industrial Relations, said the government's proposed legislation to shift from engine-based to value-based excise taxes favored the importation of models over the expansion of assembly facilities in the country.

Ofreneo said a value-based excise tax would make it easier for Japanese, American and European carmakers to bring in more models as CBU imports into the country.

Ofreneo said the new tax changes run counter to the President's ambition of spurring CBU exports with the recent overhaul of the Motor Vehicle Development Program that would ban used vehicle imports and create a subsidy package for exporters.

He warned that the tax reforms would have a negative impact on AUVs, which accounted for 44 percent of last year's industry sales largely because assemblers have been able to sell these flexible-use vehicles at affordable prices because of the tax exemptions.

The AUV has a seating capacity for at least 10 passengers which exempts it from taxes of between 35 and 50 percent. The new auto tax bill pending in Congress will slap AUVs with a minimum 15 percent excise tax.

Since AUVs generate the most jobs because half of its parts are procured locally, Ofreneo said automotive workers have strongly opposed the adoption of the new tax reforms.

Ofreneo noted that the government should not use taxation primarily as revenue tool but also as a development tool to protect the local industry from imports.

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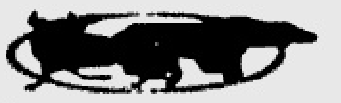
The Ten Commandments - Part II

MR. BEARBULL



Ron Nathan

THE 4TH COMMANDMENT—NEVER AVERAGE DOWN

If you bought an unsatisfactory item, would you buy it again just because it was cheaper? Obviously you would not. So when you make a mistake and BUY a stock at the wrong price, why would you want to compound the error? Pride? Ego? You can't afford these luxuries. There is no place for sentiment in trading. If you get it wrong, and everybody does at times, accept that you are not infallible and activate your stop loss. Sometimes, averaging down will turn out all right but you are flirting with disaster. A friend of mine bought WEB at 0.54 against my advice. I pleaded with him to cut it at 0.50 but instead, he averaged down at 0.50, 0.45, 0.40, 0.35, 0.30, 0.25, and 0.20 until he ran out of money. When the stock eventually fell to 0.01, he lost his house, business, his wife and children and he had a nervous breakdown. All because he would not admit that he made a mistake. A client in England did the same thing, had a heart attack and died. It is not worth it. Take your small loss like a man (or woman) and live to fight another day. If you use stop losses, as I implore you to do, you will never be in this situation.

5th COMMANDMENT—DO NOT CHASE PRICES

Sometimes you are busy with your job, or out of the country, and miss a BUY signal. By the time you realize the error, you may be tempted to jump in at a much higher level. Don't. Sometimes it will get clean away from you, but most of the time, it will have a correction and you can get in later. There is nothing wrong with averaging up because it means that the stock is in an uptrend, and that you are swimming with the current.

6th COMMANDMENT—DO NOT OVERTRADE

If you are trading every day paying commissions, sales tax, documentary stamps, VAT and the spread, and still making money, then you are a genius. I can't do it and I don't know anyone who can. The odds are stacked against you. Let us suppose you BUY FLI at P1.02. Your commission is 0.5 percent plus VAT, buying and selling, the sales tax is 0.5 percent, the documentary stamp 0.75 percent and the spread 2 percent. So, to break even, the stock has to rise 4.35 percent, over 0.04. To show a tiny profit, you have to be able to sell at P1.08, an upward movement of 6 percent. These are enormous odds to battle against. The casinos in Las Vegas make huge profits on odds of far less. In Europe, where there is only one zero on the roulette wheel, the casinos still make profits with odds of only 2.6 percent in their favor. If you keep trading, especially in a downtrend, YOU MUST LOSE. The only winners are your broker and the government. Follow the 1st Commandment, and trade only in a rising market. For the rest of the time, STAY OUT. As we have been in a downtrend since Jan. 9, 1997, when the Phisix was 3 times its current level, I have been out of the market about 95 percent of the time.

7th COMMANDMENT—DO NOT TRADE ON TIPS

This does not apply so much at the moment, as investors have not forgotten the money they lost on BW and the pyramid scams. They are more cautious now but when the market improves, the rumors will start up again. Unless the tip comes from a company director, which should not happen because that is insider information, the probability is that someone is trying to get you in so that he can get out at a better price. Don't be fooled. You will lose most of the time.

8th COMMANDMENT—DO NOT BUY INACTIVE STOCKS

Occasionally, you will hit the jackpot, but frequently you will get locked in, with no way of getting out. The amount of shares that you can buy is small, and sometimes the spread between buying and selling can be as much as 40 percent. Occasionally, there is no buyer at all. As a general rule, I only trade stocks with a daily turnover of P1 million, and I never buy more than 10 percent of the volume. This means, in effect, that I only trade the 20 most active stocks.

9th COMMANDMENT—BUY LOW PRICED STOCKS

It is all a matter of volatility. If you buy a stock standing at less than P1, e.g. EEI and DMC, these stocks can easily double in price, providing the trend has turned upwards. If you buy SMC-B at P67.50, the chances of it doubling are very remote because it is a heavy stock, widely held. So concentrate on stocks below P5, preferably P2, because they move faster. However, volatility is a two-edged sword so watch to take profits because these stocks also fall faster.

10th COMMANDMENT—LEARN TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

You can buy excellent books in the local bookstores but they cost up to P4,000 as they are imported from the US or the UK. You can get all the information free from the Internet by keying in technical analysis, bar charts, candlesticks, point and figure charts, moving averages, MACD, price oscillators, etc. I have tried several times in the past to write about technical analysis and I described how to construct and interpret various kinds of charts, which only required a math's book and a pencil. I concentrated on investors who did not have a computer and the necessary software. Unfortunately, I got absolutely no feedback and when I offered to do seminars free, with snacks and no conditions, I never received more than 2 replies. It seems that readers are disinclined to exert even minimal effort and prefer to be told what to BUY and SELL. I think it is sad that I was asked to inject a certain amount of British humor in order to entice readers to follow my column. Now my articles have a large following, judging from the amount of e-mail I receive, but I wonder how many people just read the jokes and how many read the serious stuff. Your comments would be greatly appreciated, as I am curious to know the breakdown.

In a desperate attempt to help investors to stay well informed, I started my daily newsletter, which covers our market and Wall Street in great detail, and gives BUY and SELL recommendations when applicable. It tells you which stocks foreign brokers are buying and selling so that you can position with them, not against them. I also send out the support and resistance levels of all the active stocks and alert changes daily. I even cover Europe, Asia, oil, gold, interest rates and the peso. It is a veritable 3-page comprehensive information guide, which all serious investors, traders and fund managers should subscribe to. Best of all, it incorporates the 10 commandments in a practical manner.

mrbearbull@hotmail.com

Republic Cement reports P5.9-B net loss for 2002

By Elena R. Torrijos

PUBLICLY listed Republic Cement Corp. reported a P5.897 billion net loss for 2002 after following new accounting standards, writing down deferred income tax assets and setting aside exceptional provisions for contingent liabilities.

In a statement, the cement firm said that were it not for exceptional non-cash provisions, the company would have reduced its net loss from P1.81 billion in 2001 to P567.6 million last year.

Republic Cement also said that its consolidated operating profit reached P72.3 million last year due in part to improved cement demand and a drop in cement imports from 20 percent to 5 percent.

Meanwhile, in anticipation of an economic recovery and demand growth, the board of Republic Cement last week approved the acquisition of 98.4 percent of FR Cement Corp. and 100 percent of Lloyd's Richfield Industrial Corp. from Southeast Asian Cement.

As payment, Seacem will own 26.8 percent of Republic Cement equivalent to 1.549 billion in fully paid-up common shares. In its previous close, shares of Republic Cement were priced at P0.58 each.

Republic Cement said its decision to acquire Seacem interests resulted from recommendations from commissioned studies "which showed opportunities for significant benefits, synergies and long-term shareholder value."

The acquisition, which will be subject to regulatory and stockholders' approval, will make the Republic Cement group the second largest cement concern in the Philippines with a total rated capacity of nearly 7 metric tons of clinker a year.

At present, Republic Cement's capacity is 4.4 MT while together FR Cement and LRIC have a total capacity of 2.5 MT.

To accommodate the issuance of shares to Republic Cement is owned largely by foreign cement giant Lafarge group and local groups Round Royal Inc. and southwestern Cement Ventures Inc.

Seacem is majority owned by the Calumboyan group and to a lesser extent also by the Lafarge group.

Bearish sentiment seen . . .

From page B1

"All these concerns make it prudent for investors to wait until the bearish sentiments subside," he said.

Yapster e-Trade said the SARS scare and the downgrade could support reasons for investors to exit equities trading and shift to fixed-income instruments as players see higher interest rates in the coming days.

"Meantime, brave pickers could use this weakness to position in selected stocks, especially those that could present favorable stories for the second leg this year. It would be prudent to wait until barometers settle at a comfortable base, as (first quarter) indicative numbers have yet to be announced. Immediate support is 1,000, resistance at 1,049," Yapster said.

Meanwhile, for medium- to long-term buys, brokers recommended Ayala Corp., Bank of the Philippine Island and San Miguel Corp. Yuchengco pointed out that BPI in particular had good cash dividends and growth prospects.

Yapster said that Digitel and Filinvest Land Inc. appeared to be good trading buys.

Elena R. Torrijos

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of April 24, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.05	4.1	4.05	4.1	18,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	15.5	16	15.5	16	3,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	35.5	36	35.5	35.5	278,200
Citystate Savings Bank	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	25	25	24	24	226,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28	28	27.5	28	75,000
Philippine National Bank	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	8,000
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	100
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	5,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	305,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	20,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1380	1390	1380	1390	1,340
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	10,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1050	1060	1050	1060	3,420
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	5,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.69	0.7	4,630,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	560	570	560	565	66,750
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.032	0.034	0.032	0.034	6,500,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	4,000,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	380,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	387.5	390	380	382.5	132,220
Philweb Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	27,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	7.1	7.2	7.1	7.2	74,000
Manila Electric Co. B	10.25	10.25	9.8	9.9	412,000
Petron Corp.	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	1,787,000
Trans-Asia Oil And Energy	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	550,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	10,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.55	2.55	2.5	2.5	23,000
Keppel Phils. Marine, Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
William,Gothong & Aboitiz	2	2	2	2	2,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.58	0.58	2,330,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	30,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16	16.5	16	16.25	336,200
La Tondena Distillers,Inc.	32.5	32.5	32.5	32.5	500
RFM Corp.	0.76	0.76	0.75	0.75	370,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	57.5	57	57.5	34,200
San Miguel Corp. B	66.5	66.5	66	66.5	83,200
Universal Robina Corp.	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.45	819,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	110,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.05	4.05	3.95	4	4,555,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.029	0.029	0.027	0.028	3,100,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	580,000
APC Group Inc.	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	200,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	2,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	80,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	10,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	20,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	50,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.22	0.23	0.215	0.22	6,170,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.24	1,360,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	8	8	7.9	7.9	182,000
Ionics Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	100,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	150,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	700,000
Music Corp.	0.34	0.36	0.34	0.36	1,630,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	500,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.77	100,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	350,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	167,000
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	20,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.48	2	1.38	1.88	3,963,000
Prime Gaming Phils. Inc.	28	28	24	24	2,200
SPI Technologies Inc.	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	125,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.38	0.38	1,850,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	200,000
Manila Jockey Club	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	12,000
Mondragon Intl Phils, Inc.	0.15	0.18	0.15	0.16	260,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	80,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	2,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10	10	10	10	5,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10	10	10	10	1,000
WGA - Preferred	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	30,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5	5.1	4.95	4.95	800,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	140,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.16	0.16	250,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.2	0.235	0.2	0.235	6,520,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.17	0.175	5,200,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	30,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.9	0.91	7,420,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	1,500,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	5,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	41,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	4.95	4.95	4.8	4.85	1,930,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.19	0.19	0.185	0.185	1,700,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0028	0.003	0.0028	0.003	18,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	1,000,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	100,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	13,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	20,000,000
Pacifica	0.0095	0.0095	0.009	0.009	3,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	956,360	23,842,700.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	78,809,270	164,061,520.00
PRO	23,836,000	22,761,480.00
Mining	20,800,000	376,350.00
OIL	36,000,000	120,400.00
GRAND TOTALS :	160,401,630	211,162,450.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	362.32	DOWN 5.30
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,573.56	DOWN 9.39
PRO	443.24	DOWN 13.79
Mining	1,158.49	DOWN 10.01
OIL	1.25	DOWN 0.04
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	684.72	UP 1.81
Composite	1,070.45	DOWN 13.43

NO. OF ADVANCES: 20; NO. OF DECLINES: 46; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 24; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 90; NO. OF TRADES: 1,745

CURRENCIES

April 27, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.929282	1.000000	53.692000
Japan	Yen	0.007873	0.008472	0.454900
United Kingdom	Pound	1.508782	1.623600	87.174300
Hongkong	Dollar	0.119154	0.128222	6.884500
Switzerland	Franc	0.682693	0.734646	39.444600
Canada	Dollar	0.609565	0.655953	35.219400
Singapore	Dollar	0.536692	0.577534	31.009000
Australia	Dollar	0.549383	0.591191	31.742200
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.465069	2.652661	142.426700
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.247822	0.266681	14.318600
Brunei	Dollar	0.535146	0.575871	30.919700
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000105	0.000113	0.006100
Thailand	Baht	0.021794	0.023452	1.259200
UAE	Dirham	0.253010	0.272264	14.618400
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.076100	57.778000
ArgentinaPeso	0.295949	0.318471	17.099300	
Brazil	REAL	0.264001	0.284091	15.253400
Denmark	Kroner	0.134456	0.144688	7.768600
India	Rupee	0.019433	0.020912	1.122800
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.244580	0.263193	14.131400
Mexico	New Peso	0.086606	0.093197	5.003900
New Zealand	Dollar	0.508304	0.546986	29.368800
Norway	Kroner	0.133814	0.143997	7.731500
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016036	0.017256	0.926500
South Africa	Rand	0.106925	0.115062	6.177900
Korea	Won	0.000797	0.000858	0.046100
Sweden	Kroner	0.108144	0.116374	6.248400
Syria	Pound	0.018044	0.019417	1.042500
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026928	0.028977	1.555800
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000484	0.000521	0.028000

INTEREST RATES

April 24, 2003-MART1 Rates

Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 24-Apr-03 (%)	MART1 23-Apr-03 (%)
1 Month	8.1461	8.1212
3 Months	8.3308	8.3288
6 Months	8.9865	8.9404
1 Year	9.655	9.6615
2 Years	10.3135	10.6596
3 Years	11.125	11.6058
4 Years	11.9289	12.3981
5 Years	12.2327	12.6769
7 Years	12.8981	13.1442
10 Years	13.1558	13.5038
20 Years	13.775	13.9577
25 Years	14.2558	14.4

SOURCE : MART/BLOOMBERG

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SELLING					
Alabang A	1.23M	Manila Golf (Indv)	10.2M	Sherwood	50,000
Camp John Hay Golf	220,000	Manila Golf (Cor)	12M	Subic Yacht (Indv)	120/240
Celebrity	160,000	Manila Southwoods "A"	450/500	Tagaytay Highland Golf	745,000
[illegible]	200/200/240	Sta. Elena A	1.4M	Tagaytay Highland Club	350,000
		Punta Fuego	500,000	Wack Wack	6.45M
BUYING					
Alabang A	1.7M	Manila Golf (Cor)	11M	Sta. Elena A	1.4/1.5M
Baguio Country Club	600,000	Manila Southwoods A/B	450/550,000	Tagaytay Midlands	700,000
Camp John Hay Golf	215,000	Mimosa	110,000	Tagaytay Highland Club	300,000
Club Filipino	120,000	Mt. Malarayat "A"	270,000	Valley Golf	260,000
[illegible]	100,000	Quezon City Sports	130,000	Wack Wack	6.2M
		Royale Tagaytay	60,000		

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EAGLE RIDGE "A"	250K	please call
EAGLE RIDGE "B"	350K	-
MANILA GOLF CLUB (CORP.)	11M	-
MANILA POLO CLUB	2.5M	please call
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	-	450K
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	-	540K
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"		210K
PHILIPPINE COLUMBIAN	80K	60K
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	185K	-
RIVIERA GOLF CLUB "A"	please call	-
STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	please call	1.3M
STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "B"	please call	1.4M
VALLE VERDE "C"	please call	130K
WACK WACK GOLF CLUB	6.5M	-

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Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,200,000	1,400,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	1,500,000
Baguio Country Club	550,000	600,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	70,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	80,000
Camp John Hay	200,000	220,000
Canlubang	400,000	500,000
Canyonwoods	-	150,000
Capitol Hills	110,000	125,000
Celebrity Sports Club	150,000	180,000
Club Filipino	100,000	180,000
Evercrest "A"	-	80,000
Forest Hills "A"	150,000	185,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	190,000
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	250,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	200,000	240,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	200,000	250,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	11,000,000	12,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,000,000	10,600,000
Manila Polo	-	2,450,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	450,000	500,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	540,000	650,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	600,000
Metropolitan Club "A"	90,000	130,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	130,000
Mimosa (Individual)	-	110,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	250,000	300,000
Montemar (Individual)	35,000	-
Mt. Malarayat (Individual)	-	300,000
Mt. Malarayat (Corporate)	-	450,000
Puerto Azul	-	100,000
Quezon City Sports Club	-	190,000
Rockwell	-	380,000
Royale Tagaytay "A"	-	Please Call
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	75,000
Sherwood Hills "B"	80,000	120,000
Sherwood Hills "C"	-	200,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,300,000	1,500,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,500,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	250,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	350,000	400,000
Tagaytay Highlands	790,000	820,000
Tagaytay Midlands	650,000	720,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	125,000	140,000
Valley Golf	250,000	270,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	-	8,600,000

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Bangus producers adopt export strategy

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAGUPAN CITY—Faced with threats from China and other Asian countries that are fast gaining ground in *bangus* (milkfish) production, bangus producers and processors in the country have joined hands to penetrate the world market.

The five major players in the industry organized the Bangus Association of the Philippines Inc. (Bapi) to unite stakeholders and address industry concerns such as technology, world market trends, environmental issues, credit and financing.

Jose Enrique Tanjuangco, Bapi vice president, said the organization was conceived in November through the help of the Board of Investments, the Department of Trade and Industry's marine products team, and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

The five members are Alson's Aquaculture Corp. in Sarangani; Anjo Farms, St. Anthony's and Hacienda Gervacia in Pangasinan and Jonas Foods in Metro Manila.

Tanjuangco, owner of Anjo Farms, said Bapi's main concern was to protect the boneless bangus from threats posed by Vietnam, Indonesia, Taiwan, Malaysia and China, which were engaged in bangus production but have yet to learn the trade of deboning bangus.

The Bapi has applied for patent for the deboning/boneless process with the International Patent Office and will file for a patent in the United States in six months, he said.

The Bapi is also developing a bangus "country-of-origin" logo to ensure that only accredited quality bangus and other processed bangus products are exported.

On May 1 and 2, while Dagupan City celebrates the 2nd Bangus Festival, the Bapi, the DTI, the BFAR and the Dagupan City government will hold the first National Bangus Industry Congress.

With the theme "Bangus Goes Global," it will bring together prime movers from the government, farming sector, support industries, academe, research institutions and financing institutions to discuss ways to address issues and concerns of the industry.

It will also come up with strategies that will enhance the all competitiveness of local bangus growers and stakeholders into a unified nationwide bangus industry.

PLDT vows to open Internet infrastructure

By Abigail L. Ho

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. is working out a "mutually acceptable agreement" with independent Internet service providers as it commits to open its high-speed Internet infrastructure when it gets the technological capability to do so.

PLDT senior vice president and corporate business group head Alfredo Panlilio said in a statement over the weekend that, at present, the company did not have the "technological capability" to allow multiple users to interface with PLDT's digital subscriber line (DSL) network.

However, he said modifications were currently being made for PLDT's DSL network to be able to work with multiple users.

The Philippine Internet Services Organization (Piso), a group of independent ISPs, filed a complaint against PLDT late last year for alleged discriminatory and predatory pricing and refusal to open its DSL infrastructure to other players.

PLDT denied both charges. It said that it had a fair pricing scheme and that it was really willing to open its DSL infrastructure but it just did not have the technical capability to do so at the time of the complaint.

"We agreed with the Piso members that once we are ready to actually provide that DSL infrastructure to them, then we are willing to share that infrastructure at mutually agreed terms and conditions," Panlilio said.

"We will open up (our) DSL infrastructure as soon as PLDT is technically ready. We are willing to sit down and review business models with them to take a look at what commercial agreements we can arrive at," he added.

PLDT also reacted to reports that it had cut by half the rates of its E1/R2 circuits for ISPs due to pressure from some members of Congress and from competition posed by other telecommunications firms.

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World Bank worried over SSS budget gap,GSIS investment woes

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE WORLD Bank has expressed concerns over the snail-paced implementation of reforms needed to ensure the sustainability of state-owned pension funds Social Security System and Government Service Insurance System.

In its latest country briefing on the Philippines, the bank said it was worried over the budgetary shortfalls of the SSS and the poor returns on the investments of the GSIS.

The World Bank report said the financial condition of the SSS, the largest pension fund serving private sector employees, remained "problematic," as the latest actuarial valuation indicated that from 1999 to 2001, benefit pay-outs exceeded contributions by more than P7 billion.

"The deficit has been paid with funds taken from the SSS' reserve, reducing the remaining life of the fund at an accelerated pace," the bank said.

"The actuarial valuation shows a possible depletion of the pension fund by 2015 without appropriate remedial measures," it said.

In an effort to address short-term financial problems, the SSS implemented a 1-percent increase in the employers' contribution.

But the bank said a "carefully planned" and "phased in" contribution rates, together with other parametric and structural changes, were further needed to ensure the SSS' medium- and long-term viability.

"The problems of the GSIS are different in scope from those of the SSS. The GSIS has accumulated excess liquidity amounting to about P30 billion. It is facing a shortage of investment options," the report said.

"This shortage means that returns on investments continue to fall below the levels needed for long-term sustainability," it said.

The bank stressed that the GSIS must find alternative investment options locally and/or abroad and diversity its portfolio to obtain better returns.

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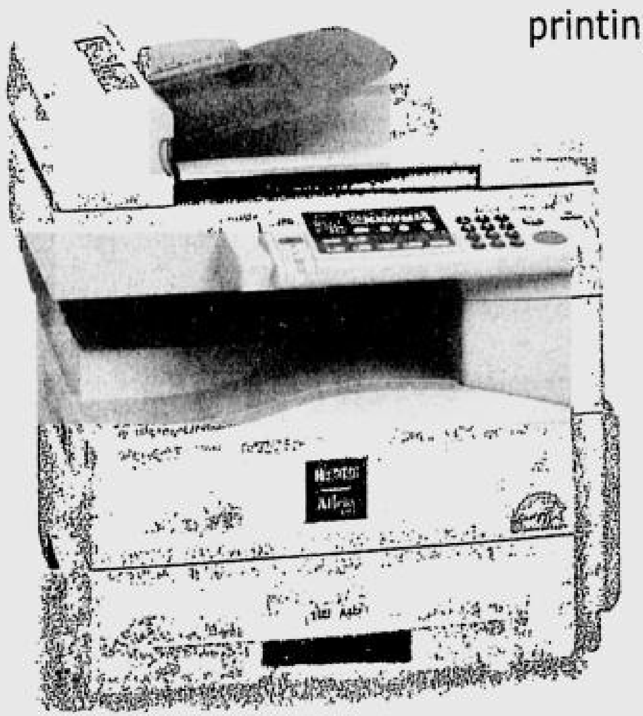

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SEC to start review of 2002 financial statements

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission is studying the possible sanctions that will be imposed on publicly listed companies found to have misstated material amounts in their 2001 financial statements as the commission prepares to conduct a review of recently submitted 2002 financial statements.

SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said the commission and its general accountant Roberto Manabat would meet this week to discuss the penalties or sanctions and whether a directive should be made for the restatement of the financial reports.

The SEC last year tapped a team of accounting and business experts from the University of the Philippines to review the 2001 financial statements submitted by listed firms. Based on the results of the review covering the statements of 131 publicly listed companies, 51 were found to have violated major accounting standards.

The most important and frequent violations based on the review were: non-disclosure of amounts of material related to party transactions, inadequate disclosures on assets used as security loans and missing or defective Rule 68 schedules. The SEC's amended Rule 68 provides the form and content of financial statements to be filed with the SEC.

The SEC Office of the General Accountant has since asked these companies to explain some of the violations. In some cases, the OGA accepted the explanations but in other cases, the OGA recommended that action must be taken against violators.

The SEC will again tap the UP team this time to review the 2002 financial statements submitted by publicly listed companies and even those companies with secondary licenses. Bautista said the SEC would also look into training its staff on how to undertake financial statement review and analysis.

The SEC is also planning to implement a number of initiatives to upgrade accounting standards and to better monitor compliance with these standards.

Mango exports to HK seen going down

IBA, Zambales—The outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in Hong Kong and the resulting decline in tourist arrivals there have reduced the demand for fresh mangoes from Zambales, mango growers and traders in the province said.

Cel Ducuyanan, one of the biggest commercial mango growers and traders here, said the volume of orders from exporters to Hong Kong had dropped since March.

No statistics are immediately available on the drop in the province's mango export volume but Ducuyanan said this has been the common observation now in the sector.

Emil Mangoba, a mango grower, said much of the orders were coming now from domestic buyers.

Zambales, the third biggest mango-producing province in Central Luzon, yields an average of seven million kilograms of the fruit, mostly of the carabao variety.

About 72 percent of the mangoes are consumed locally. The remaining 28 percent are exported mainly to Hong Kong and Japan, a report of the Zambales Mango Industry Development Council showed.

Hong Kong still remains the country's major market for fresh mangoes, with 79 percent of the annual 41,356 metric tons brought to that former British colony.

Ducuyunan and Mangoba lamented that the SARS outbreak in Hong Kong occurred amid efforts by the Zambales provincial government to improve the industry through institutional, technological, financial and infrastructure support. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Pagcor income hits P5B

PHILIPPINE Amusement & Gaming Corp. reported a record-breaking income of P5.05 billion for the first quarter of the year.

"Our first quarter income exceeds by 8 percent the P4.65 billion posted in the same period last year. We hope this will go a long way in helping President Macapagal-Arroyo's efforts to stem the budget deficit and sustain her numerous programs for the poor," Pagcor chair Efraim C. Genuino said.

Last March, Pagcor's gaming establishments throughout the country generated winnings of P1.82 billion, the second highest monthly record in Pagcor's 17-year history after the P1.85 billion posted in September 2002. The state-owned gaming firm declared an income of P1.77 billion for January and P1.46 billion for February.

"We hope Pagcor's record-breaking income will redound to better benefits and programs for our 11,000 employees who are the primary reason why the company continues to be the reliable revenue-generating arm it is today," Genuino said.

Genuino said Pagcor hopes to continue with its winning streak by intensifying marketing efforts to promote Casino Filipino, specifically as a wholesome source of entertainment, and enhancing the delivery of basic customer services. Substantial income is also sought to be realized from cost-cutting measures, the continuous streamlining of gaming operations and the expansion of existing facilities.

The Pagcor chief pointed out that while the SARS outbreak would have an impact on tourism-related businesses like the casinos, he was expecting the fallout to be minimal.

GOINGS-ON

The Columns Tower 2 launched

COMMUNITY Innovations Inc. (CII), a subsidiary of Ayala Land Inc., yesterday said Tower One of

The Columns, Ayala Avenue, is almost sold out, recording a 98-percent sales in four months.

The Columns, Ayala Avenue is a trio of 30-story towers on Ayala Avenue, corner Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue. Each tower has 284 residential units.

Its sales performance is compared with that of Verdana Homes, its subdivision project located between Las Piñas and Bacoor. Verdana Homes also targets upcoming professionals, entrepreneurs and young families and has sold 500 units in eight months.

In a recent event dubbed "The Good Life" for The Columns, Ayala Avenue buyers, Lacson announced the sales launch of Tower Two.

Outstanding PFI

A CONSISTENT recipient of awards from government financial institutions and bilateral and multilateral funding agencies for more than a decade, Equitable PCI Bank was recently cited by the Development Bank of the Philippines as one of the Most Outstanding Participating Financial Institutions (PFI) for 2002 under the Japan Bank for International Cooperation Facilities of large scale and shipping industries.

The country's third largest private bank was recognized for its active role in the growth and development of industries in the nation, and for having the largest loan exposure among the participating financial institutions.

Gov't seen writing off . . .

From page B4

competition from cheap Russian steel and mounting debt expenses. "The banks and potential investors would not put their money into NSC just for the government to collect taxes," Roxas said.

At least five foreign trading firms have expressed interest in bidding for control of NSC—Minmetals Zhejiang International Trading Co. Ltd. and China International Iron and Steel Investments Corp. (China); Bhicknapahan group of France; Bel Trade Investment Holdings Ltd. of Hong Kong; and Tael Capital of London. They are expected to join Cathay Pacific Steel Co., Allengoal Steel Fabrication Inc. and Voest Alpine that have made an offer for the company's majority shares two years ago.

Roxas said the banks and NSC's Malaysian shareholder Danaharta were continuing to lay the groundwork for the sale of the restructured NSC this year even though one of the creditors—Credit Agricole Indosuez—has opposed the debt-swap arrangement which pared down NSC's loan from P18 billion to P2 billion. He said the creditor banks would meet again next week to establish their position on some outstanding issues.

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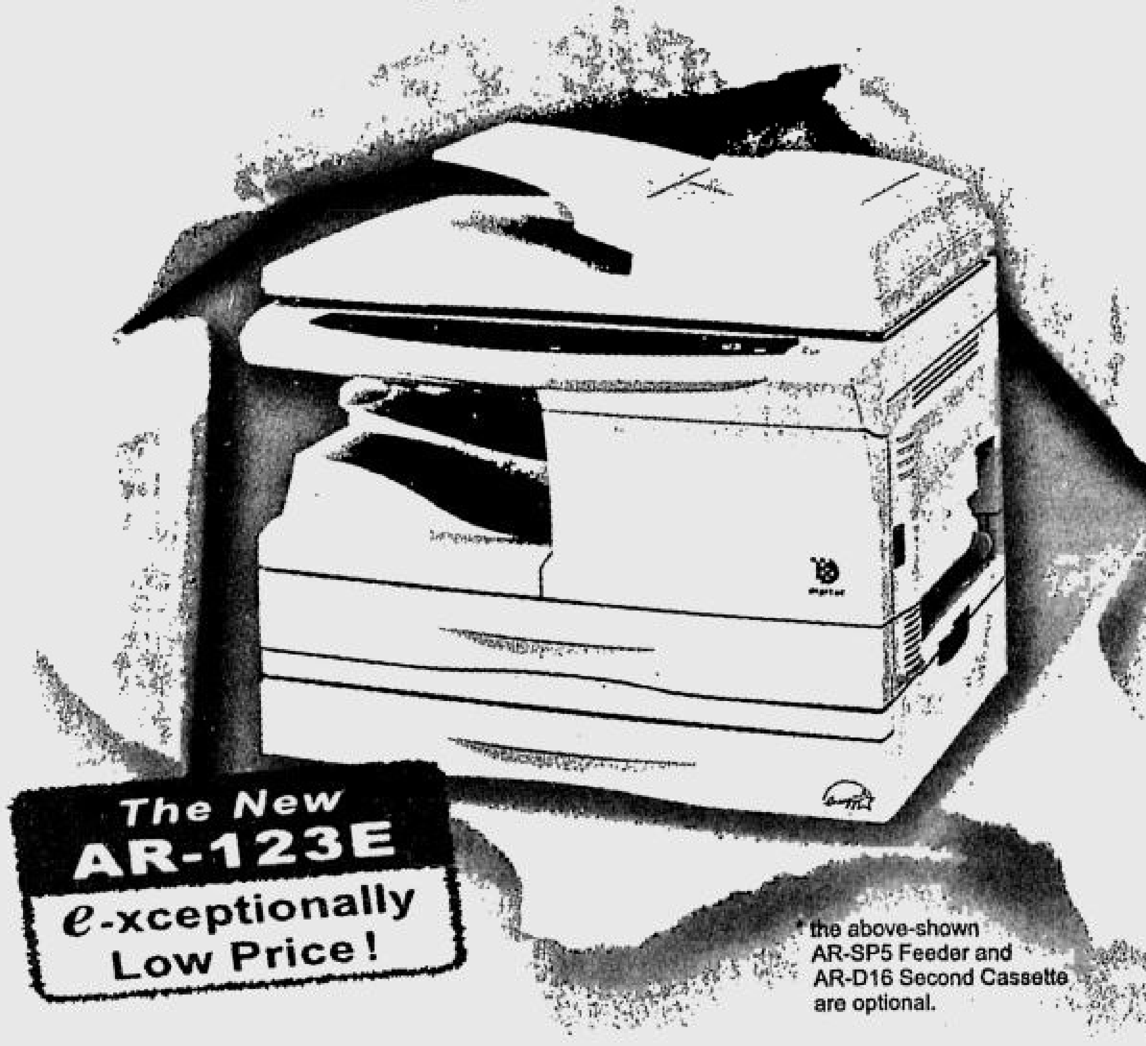

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TRADERS PUZZLED

Oil ends lower, market digests Opec increase

NEW YORK—Oil prices fell for the fourth straight day on Friday as traders puzzled over Opec's surprise deal to raise formal output quotas while promising to cut excess supply.

In New York, US crude futures ended at $26.26 a barrel, down 38 cents on the day and 15 percent for the week that included a five-month low on Thursday.

The benchmark Brent crude oil lost 24 cents to $24.09 a barrel.

Prices dropped after the Opec cartel's Thursday decision to raise production quotas and cut back less than expected on extra crude it pumped to stop prices from spiking during the US-led war in Iraq.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries presented the deal as a cut of two million barrels per day from real output levels, which had soared above official quotas in the first few months of the year.

Some analysts said Opec's estimates of current production, and its figures for the promised cut, were confusing and did nothing to allay fears of a supply glut once Iraqi crude exports resume.

"Opec's surprise quota increase unnecessarily confused the market at a time when there is sufficient uncertainty with debate over the return of Iraqi volumes, concerns over economic recovery and the impact of the SARS virus," said Matthew Warburton of UBS Warburg bank in a report.

The cartel had sanctioned extra oil sales before the war in Iraq to prevent an oil price shock.

Some Opec members, particularly Saudi Arabia, had ramped up supplies earlier to cover for hitches in Venezuela and Nigeria.

"Now Venezuela is back, Nigeria is back, the war is over and the world is coming back to normal, we are trying to normalize things," said Opec President Abdullah al-Attiyah.

Dealers said that, with Iraq already off the market for a month, the other 10 Opec members seemed intent on grabbing market share before tackling the reintegration of Baghdad in the cartel's system of output limits.

While it will be some time before Baghdad even matches prewar production, down the road it has the potential to snatch second place in Opec's ranks behind Saudi Arabia.

Before the war, Iraq was pumping at a peak of 2.5 million bpd and its exports—controlled by the United Nations under a humanitarian sales scheme—accounted for around 4 percent of internationally traded oil.

United Nations members are still discussing a new legal framework under which Baghdad could resume oil sales to the world market.

The United States will introduce a resolution in the council next week that lifts sanctions against Iraq and calls for a special UN coordinator in a low-level consultative role, Bush administration officials said.

The resolution—which is bound to be contentious with permanent UN Security Council members Russia and France—would end UN control over the lucrative oil-for-food program.

The draft US resolution appeared to be an opening ploy and would probably be whittled down once negotiations began, diplomats said.

"The timing and magnitude of Iraqi exports is uncertain and will likely complicate Opec's deliberations for many meetings to come. Opec will reduce production to accommodate Iraqi oil, but with a lag of several months," said Mike Mayer, analyst with Prudential Financial.

Saudi Arabia's Oil Minister Ali al-Naimi said output could be trimmed again at an Opec meeting in Qatar on June 11, just days after the new deal takes effect on June 1. *Reuters*

Economy to call tune for US stocks

NEW YORK—Stock investors have celebrated surprisingly good results from corporate America in recent weeks, but Wall Street's euphoria may fade as investors take a closer look at the economy.

As the war in Iraq slips from radar screens, stock traders have turned their focus to prospects for the economy and corporate profits, searching for clues to whether a much anticipated rebound is finally taking place.

Along with the continuing flood of corporate America's earnings, Wall Street has a slew of key reports on the economy to sort through this week, including data on consumer confidence, the manufacturing sector and employment.

A closely watched speech before Congress by Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan will also garner close attention.

While many reports on the economy are being brushed off as tainted by the war in Iraq, the stock market's super-charged rally in recent weeks has made it particularly vulnerable to bad news on the economic front.

"The numbers, in general, should be improvements over prior months. The question is: Is it going to be enough improvement to satisfy the market?" said Benjamin Pace, managing director at Deutsche Bank Private Wealth Management.

This month alone, the Standard & Poor's 500 index has risen 6 percent, the Nasdaq Composite gained 7 percent and the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 4 percent.

From the 2003 low it hit in mid-March, the S&P 500 is up more than 12 percent.

Jon Brorson, managing director of equities at Neuberger Berman, said, "We've had a pretty good move, and my guess would be that you're going to see a general downward move in the week on profit-taking off the big jump we had since March.

Anxiety about the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome or SARS virus, which has killed at least 276 people worldwide, mostly in Asia, is just another reason for investors to be wary, analysts said.

Consumer spending has been a linchpin of US economic growth, and analysts say they will be looking to a key report on consumer confidence next week to help determine whether Americans will maintain their spending habits.

Economists in a Reuters survey predicted the Conference Board's Consumer Confidence index rose to 69.8 in April from 62.5 in March.

The Institute of Supply Management's manufacturing sector survey, however, is expected to show the beleaguered sector is still struggling. Economists on average forecast a rise in the index to 47.3 in April from 46.2 in March. A reading below 50 generally indicates contraction.

Lingering weakness in the US job market could also be a cause for concern on Wall Street.

The government's monthly jobs report is expected to show on Friday that the economy lost 53,000 jobs in April, while the unemployment rate rose to 5.9 percent from 5.8 percent.

But Wall Street's optimists are likely to blame any weakness on the Iraq war, which whipped up uncertainty and kept many companies from hiring or making spending decisions, said Milton Ezrati, senior economic strategist at Lord Abbett & Co. *Reuters*

US trade chief heads to Paris, Berlin for talks

WASHINGTON—US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick heads to Europe for talks aimed at putting troubled world trade negotiations back on track, the Bush administration said on Friday.

Zoellick is expected to meet in Paris on Monday with French Economic Minister Francis Mer and hold additional bilateral talks on Tuesday with several developing countries, the US Trade Representative's office said.

He will attend the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's annual meeting on Wednesday and meet with European Union Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy on Thursday. Zoellick will then travel to Berlin for talks with German government and industry officials on Friday.

The trip comes at a sensitive time in US-EU trade relations because of several disputes and the opposition of France and Germany to the US-led war on Iraq.

A new survey released on Friday by a leading public relations agency said one-in-three US consumers were ready to boycott goods from France and Germany.

It followed another survey earlier this week showing an average of 12 percent of people in France, Germany and Britain would boycott US products over the war.

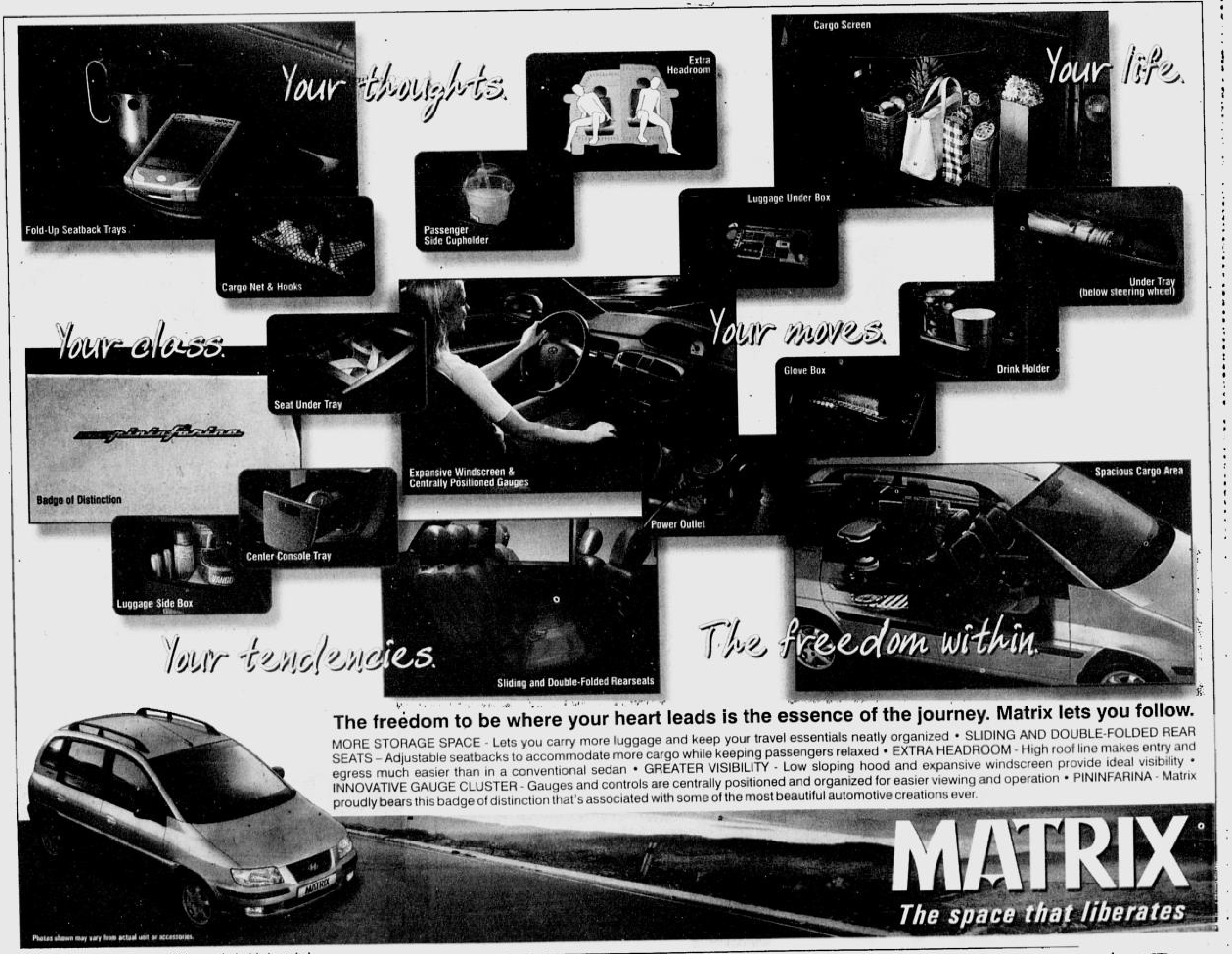
Despite the polls, US industry officials hoped damage to trade flows would be minimal.

In a statement, Zoellick said his main focus on the trip would be on restoring momentum to stalled world trade talks.

Because of a number of missed negotiating deadlines, many fear the World Trade Organization's meeting in September in Cancun, Mexico, could be a replay of the trade body's failed December 1999 ministerial meeting in Seattle.

"This is a very sensitive time in the world economy and in these negotiations," Zoellick said. "The road to Cancun requires us all to continue exploring ways to bridge differences and develop the consensus necessary to move forward."

A major issue in the talks for the United States and many developing countries is agricultural trade reform. *Reuters*



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TFE backs Panglao 2003 Coral Reef Project

TOTALFINAELF Philippines (TFE Philippines) supports Panglao 2003, an international marine biodiversity project slated this May.

Citing the Philippines as among the world's most fascinating areas for coastal ecosystems study, marine experts from 15 nations all over the globe will visit Bohol province to embark on the project that aims, among others, to shed light on marine species diversity on a global scale.

The project's main proponents are TotalFinaElf Foundation and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The other groups supporting the project are Conservation International and the Asean Regional Center for Biodiversity Conservation in collaboration with the University of San Carlos in Cebu City.

In line with its parent company's commitment to the protection of coastal ecosystems, TFE Philippines has pledged its support for the project whose beginnings date back to 1992, when TotalFinaElf Foundation found thousands of marine species in the exotic sites of New Caledonia. Similar studies followed in 2000 at Loyalty Islands in Lifou and in Rapa (Australes archipelago) in 2002. The project culminates in Panglao, which is considered to hold a key position at the heart of the Indo-Pacific species richness gradient.

A team of 75 international marine experts will conduct the 45-day fieldwork from May to July 2003 to acquire new scientific knowledge on the richness of Philippine marine species. Panglao 2003 is led by senior professors Dr. Philippe Bouchet of the French National Museum and Dr. Danilo Largo, Biology department chair of the University of San Carlos in Cebu. Participants in the study are composed of marine scientists, professors, students, divers, technicians and volunteers from 15 countries, namely Austria, Belgium, Italy, Australia, Russia, Singapore, Sweden, Taiwan, France, New Caledonia, Norway, Spain, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and the United States.

Additionally, local institutions like the Philippine National Museum and the Marine Science Institute of the University of the Philippines will participate.

Panglao is located at the west portion of Bohol's capital, Tagbilaran City.

AI-AI GOES FOR STANDARD

Popular actress and comedienne Ai-Ai de las Alas is featured as the celebrity endorser of Standard Electric Fans in a new TV commercial that started airing this week in leading TV programs. Shown signing the contract with Ai-Ai are Vincent Tanjutco, executive vice president of Creative Concepts Inc. and Boy Abunda, Ai-Ai's manager, director Mac Alejandre (left), who megged the Standard Electric Fan TV commercial, witnessing the signing. Standard is the largest selling electric fan brand in the market and has always been known for its durability for more than four decades, living up to its promise 'Tatak Standard. Tibay Standard.'

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FREE FLIGHTS FROM HSBC

Lucky HSBC cardholders Carmelo Enriquez, Teresita Tan Perez and Johnny Luna recently won travel packages to Los Angeles, Bangkok and Sydney, respectively, courtesy of HSBC and Philippine Airlines' Mabuhay Miles. HSBC senior vice president for marketing James Benoit and PAL's AVP for product marketing Joy Pasiliao awarded their prizes, which include business class tickets and hotel accommodations. HSBC's Mabuhay Miles Visa is an international credit card that allows cardholders to exchange purchases into bonus miles under PAL's frequent flyer program, Mabuhay Miles.

Hospitality industry readies grand trade exhibit at WTC

CASHING in on the uptrend in tourism, the country's hospitality industry and allied sectors are staging a grand professional trade exhibit at the World Trade Center Metro Manila from May 29 to 31.

Dubbed "Hotelex 2003," the exhibit will feature the latest state-of-the-art equipment, supplies, services and food and beverage products for the hotel, restaurant, catering and baking businesses.

Hotelex also offers the most focused market of exhibitors and visitors from hotels, restaurants, bars, fast food chains, caterers, bakeshops, supermarkets and other establishments.

Products to be showcased include furniture, point-of-sale systems, service crew uniforms, food service equipment, and wines and beverages, among many others.

Hotelex will also feature a fashion parade highlighting the uniforms in vogue for the hotel and restaurant industry-from the doorman to the front desk, waiters, chefs and room attendants. The fashion parade will be staged by the Uniform Manufacturers Association of the Philippines.

Likewise to be featured are themed table settings exquisitely crafted by the Food Caterers Association of the Philippines, with the Hotel & Restaurant Chefs Association of the Philippines (HRCAP) providing the "Gourmet Lunch."

Members of the HRCAP will also unveil their culinary skills in an on-the-spot cooking demo dubbed "Chef's Best." So will famous bakers and personalities, who will share their favorite recipes at a so-called "Celebrity Corner."

There will also be informative seminars, product sampling and presentations from exhibitors, and networking with the rest of the hospitality community.

The 11th since 1993, Hotelex 2003 is a project of event organizer and manager Worldexco (891-8638, 834-7404, e-mail hotelex@worldexco.com; wdx@info.com.ph; and website www.worldexco.com.)

The event is sponsored by Nextel, Chase Technologies Corp., Art & Image Technology, F&B World and The Brain Computer Corp., and supported by the Hotel and Restaurant Purchasing Managers Association of the Philippines, Food Caterers Association of the Philippines, International Wines and Spirits Association of the Philippines, Philippine Franchise Association, Philippine Retailers Association, and the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines.

The visitors in last year's Hotelex were mostly top management executives (34.9 percent), followed by consumers (22.2 percent), staff (20 percent), middle management (18 percent) and independent professionals (4.9 percent).

By business activity, the bulk or 25.14 percent of last year's visitors came from the restaurant industry, 13.14 percent from hotels and resorts, 10 percent from the catering sector, 9.85 percent from suppliers, 9.28 percent from fast food outlets, 5.85 percent from food manufacturers, 2.7 percent from supermarkets, 2.57 percent from government, 1.29 percent from convention facilities, and 1.29 percent from media.

WORLDBEX FOUNDER RECEIVES AWARD

For his continued support to environment-protection causes, Worldbex Services International (WSI) founding chair Jospeh L. Ang received an award from the Habitat for Humanity during the 8th Philippine World Building and Construction Exposition (Worldbex 2003). Shown, from right, are Margie Moran-Floirendo, board member of the Habitat for Humanity and chair of Youth Build 2003, Ang holding the plaque of recognition, Karen Davila, ABS-CBN Headline News anchor and Youth Build 2003 ambassador to Habitat for Humanity, and Edward Diamonon, vice president of WSI.

TAGUIG RESIDENT WINS EXPLORER

Johnnie Walker Black Label, the world's number one de luxe Scotch Whiskey, and Duty Free Philippines recently turned over a brand new Explorer to the grand prize winner of its recent raffle draw. Winner Alex Gregorio, a resident of Taguig, Metro Manila, whose wife Lani is a 'balikbayan' from Canada, received his prize at the Ford showroom in Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City. Shown holding the symbolic car key is Gregorio with Glenn Manlapaz, commercial unit manager of Diageo Philippines, exclusive distributor of Johnnie Walker, Nena Bonifacio, Duty Free Philippines store operations manager, Rina Anduiza, Diageo Philippines account manager for Duty Free, and Jack Rene Palacio, general sales manager of Ford Cars Makati.

Bits & Clips

QCGH's hard-to-resist offer

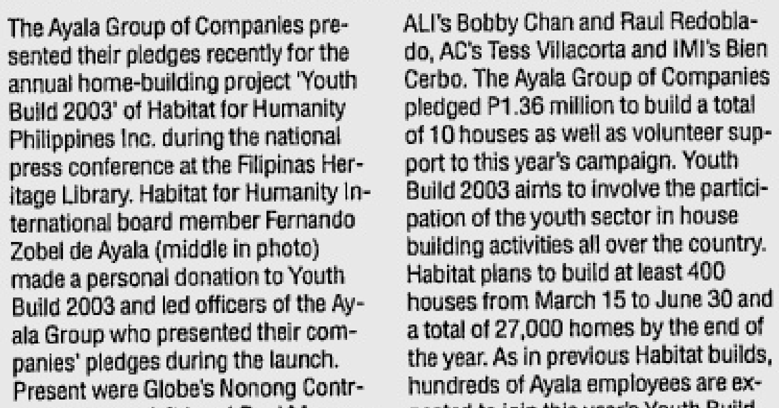
THE QUEZON City General Hospital department of pediatrics is now accepting applicants for residency training. The government-subsidized hospital is offering the incoming batch of doctor-trainees a package that is hard to resist: compensation. For inquiries, visit the hospital on Seminary Road in Quezon City, or call the admitting section at 455-4789.

2 days of Antipolo fest

FOR many Filipinos, a summer without Antipolo is not summer at all. It is on April 30 that the march to Antipolo starts the month-long Antipolo Pilgrimage. The story about the Virgin is reenacted with her replica staying overnight, and at the dawn of May 1, the Nuestra Senora de Buenviaje is fetched by the Bishop and the City Mayor on her journey home. For the past five years, Mayor Angelito C. Gatlabayan has fulfilled his pilgrimage vows with other devotees and a great number of the youth in Metro Manila joining the pilgrimage back to Antipolo City. After the early morning mass, the city awakens to the song of "Tayo Na Sa Antipolo" and gets ready for the Sumaka Festival. Sumakah stands for Suman, Mangga, Kasuy and the Hamaka-products Antipolo is famous for. Buying sweets, kakanins, and other delicacies has become part of the Antipolo tradition.

Celebrity class at Gold's Gym

TOP ENTERTAINMENT celebrities are going to be featured in Gold's Gym's Star-Xercise or celebrity-led class starting April at Gold's Gym Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, Makati City. Among them include Marc Nelson for the Abs class, Raymond Bagatsing for Muay Thai, Diane Castillejo for Skip Fit, Carlos Agassi for Full Body Workout, Monsour del Rosario for Taekwondo, and Karaoke Spinning with Ana Fegi. Gold's Gym is the largest gym chain in the world, recognized for its passion, unique heritage and experience as the authority in fitness, with 650 gyms and over 2,500,000 members in 34 countries. Gold's Gym is the preferred workout place of Hollywood celebrities such as Tom Cruise, Pierce Brosnan and Keanu Reeves. Exciting promos are available this month especially for Citibank cardholders. Call 752-8081 or visit the Glorietta branch for details.



AYALA GROUP OF COMPANIES SUPPORTS HABITAT

The Ayala Group of Companies presented their pledges recently for the annual home-building project 'Youth Build 2003' of Habitat for Humanity Philippines Inc. during the national press conference at the Filipinas Heritage Library. Habitat for Humanity International board member Fernando Zobel de Ayala (middle in photo) made a personal donation to Youth Build 2003 and led officers of the Ayala Group who presented their companies' pledges during the launch. Present were Globe's Nonong Contreras (extreme left) and Ruel Maranan, BPI's Roni Tapia-Merk (3rd from left), ALI's Bobby Chan and Raul Redoblado, AC's Tess Villacorta and IMI's Bien Cerbo. The Ayala Group of Companies pledged P1.36 million to build a total of 10 houses as well as volunteer support to this year's campaign. Youth Build 2003 aims to involve the participation of the youth sector in house building activities all over the country. Habitat plans to build at least 400 houses from March 15 to June 30 and a total of 27,000 homes by the end of the year. As in previous Habitat builds, hundreds of Ayala employees are expected to join this year's Youth Build activities.

SKIN_PRIVATE JOYCE IN EVER GOTESCO

Actress-entrepreneur Joyce Jimenez opens an outlet of her bath and skin products line SKIN_Private Joyce in Ever Gotesco Commonwealth with outlet partners (from left) Joy and Jaime de la Rosa. Owned jointly by Private Joyce Inc. and the General Bath and Body Company, SKIN_Private Joyce has recently launched a new perfume line for men and women. It is set to offer to the market a new line of massage oils, body mists, bath soaps and sunscreen lotion this summer.

US economy soft in Q1 but rays of hope seen

Teamsters
FIGHT for Flight Attendant RIGHTS

NORTHWEST Airlines flight attendants are joined by Teamsters Union members during a rally outside the airline's annual shareholder meeting in New York, April 25. Northwest Airlines is using the threat of Chapter 11 to persuade employees to accept $1 billion in annual cuts. AP

WASHINGTON—The US economy grew at a lackluster pace in the first quarter, hit by the war in Iraq and harsh winter weather, but rays of hope emerged as consumers' moods brightened and sales of new homes surged.

US gross domestic product grew 1.6 percent in the first three months of 2003, the Commerce Department said. GDP, the broadest gauge of the economy's health, fell far short of economists' predictions for a growth rate of 2.3 percent.

"This tells me there is not a lot of forward momentum in the economy and that we are really going sideways," said John Silvia, chief economist at Wachovia Bank in Charlotte, NC.

Stocks slumped on the data, retreating from a rally earlier this week that was sparked by upbeat earnings. But not all economic news was gloomy.

The University of Michigan said its closely watched index of consumer sentiment surged in April after hitting a nine-year low in March. Also, data from Commerce showed a 7.3-percent jump in new home sales in March.

The "final" April index from the University of Michigan rose to 86, surpassing economists' forecasts for 84.8. That was up from a reading in March of 77.6, which had been the lowest since September 1993.

The end to the war in Iraq earlier this month put consumers in better spirits but analysts said it was far from certain they were about to embark on a spending spree.

"Now that the war is over, where we go from here is the key," said Joel Naroff, president of Naroff Economic Advisors in Holland, Pa. "If we start seeing consumers spend more and businesses begin to invest and hire, then we can blame the war and get on with the recovery. If the sluggishness was the result of more fundamental problems, we could be in trouble."

Although consumers have been less than eager to spend money on expensive vacations and dinners out, they are still pouring money into the housing market, perhaps attracted by its security at time when stocks are falling.

Housing investment shot up 12 percent in the first quarter, according to the GDP report.

In March, Americans scurried to take advantage of low interest rates and bought new homes at a frenetic annual rate of 1.012 million units, according to a separate Commerce Department report. That sales rate was well ahead of expectations for 898,000. *Reuters*

SEC to unveil Wall St. deal over stock analyst scandal

WASHINGTON—US market regulators plan to hold a news conference today to unveil a landmark $1.4 billion settlement in the Wall Street stock analysts scandal, sources familiar with the matter said on Friday.

The settlement was expected to include an addendum meant to address tax and insurance disputes involved in the agreement with 10 major brokerages, regulators and the stock exchanges.

At the conference, Securities and Exchange Commission Chair William Donaldson was expected to say the SEC has approved the settlement and sent it to a court for review.

The brokerages—including Citigroup Inc.'s Salomon Smith Barney Unit, Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs , Credit Suisse Group and others—hope the deal will begin to draw a line under one of Wall Street's most damaging and embarrassing episodes.

Probes by Spitzer, other state regulators and the SEC alleged some stock analysts issued slanted company research—mainly during the 1990s technology and telecommunications stock bubble—to curry favor with corporate managers and drum up investment banking business for their brokerages.

Under the terms of the settlement—first revealed in December—the brokerages agreed to pay about $900 million in fines and restitution, about $450 million to fund independent research and $85 million for investor education programs. *Reuters*

American Air averts bankruptcy

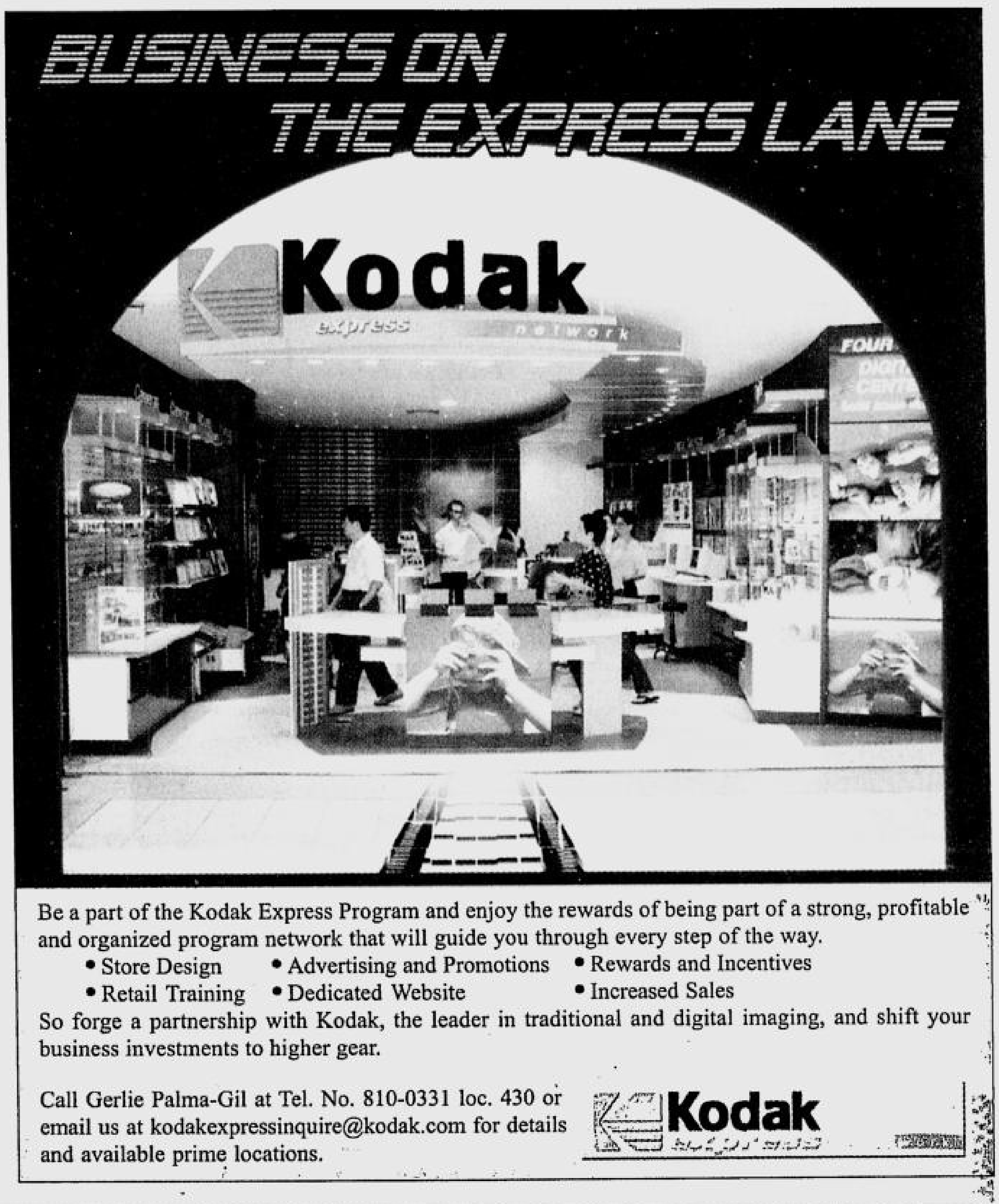
DALLAS/CHICAGO—American Airlines averted an imminent bankruptcy filing for the third time in a month as its flight attendants agreed on Friday to a concessions deal aimed at keeping the world's largest carrier out of Chapter 11.

The decision from the Association of Professional Flight Attendants to accept a revised proposal from American parent AMR Corp. helped cap a turbulent few days at the carrier that included the resignation of Chief Executive Don Carty, appointment of a successor and an earnings report that showed AMR lost over $1 billion in the first quarter.

Carty resigned under pressure on Thursday after employees rebelled over his failure to inform them of executive bonuses and pensions before they voted on concessions. Sources had said the airline may file for bankruptcy within days if it could not get the union that represents flight attendants to agree to the revised concessions deal.

The other two major unions at American—the Allied Pilots Association and Transport Workers Union, which represents ground workers and mechanics—said on Thursday they agreed to certify their votes on wage concessions after the company agreed to a new incentive plan, reduce the terms of the deal to five years from almost six years, and allow the contracts to be open for renegotiation after three years.

The flight attendants union agreed on Friday to accept concessions with the same new terms. *Reuters*



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Avon profit up

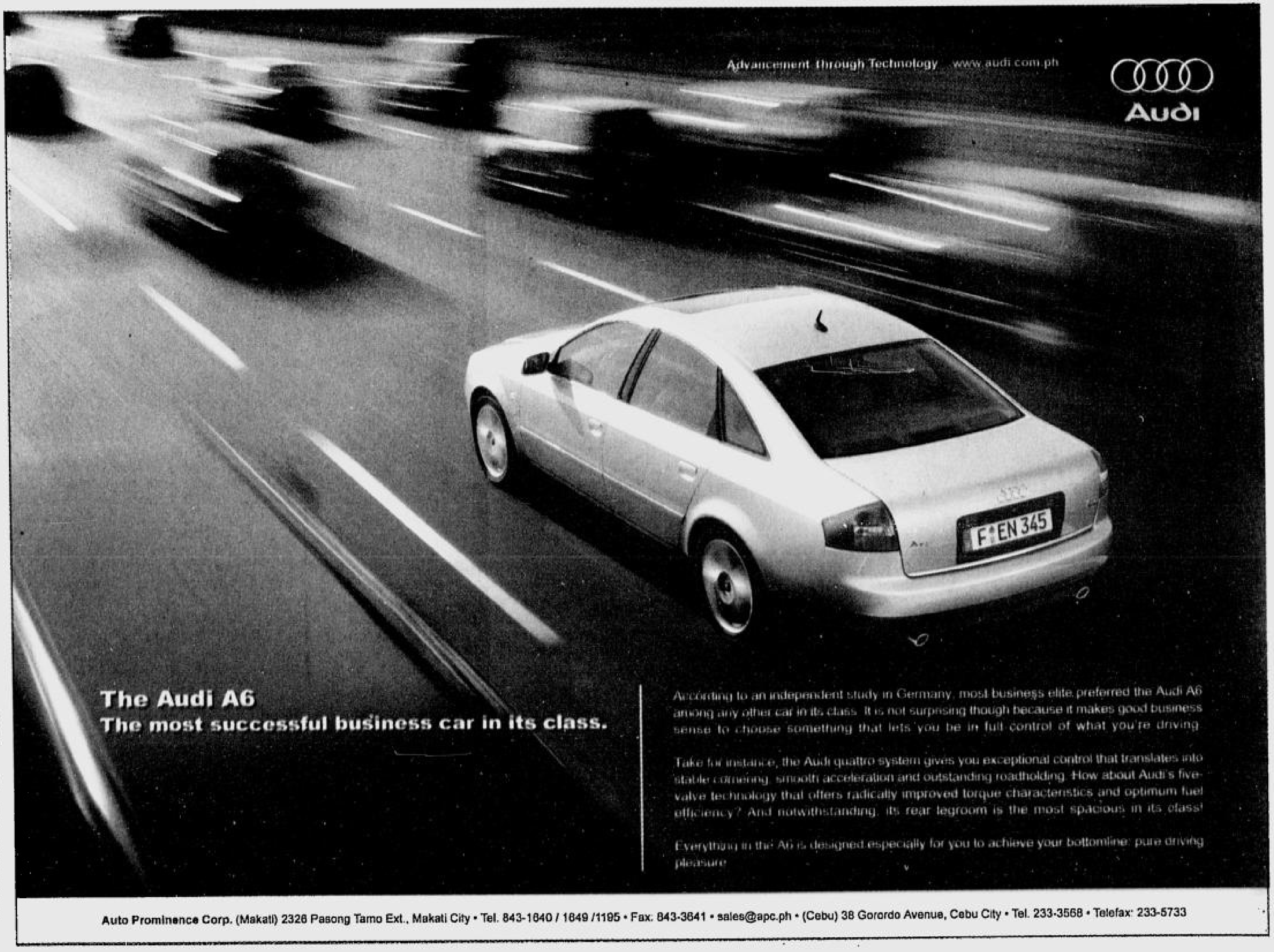
NEW YORK—Avon Products Inc. , the world's largest direct seller of cosmetics, on Friday said its first-quarter profit edged higher, helped by new products and strong growth in international sales.

But the company said earnings in the current quarter would fall short of analysts' consensus estimate and said the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome is affecting its business in China.

Avon, however, backed its previous full-year outlook.

New York-based Avon posted net earnings in the quarter of $98.9 million, or 42 cents per share, compared with $96.3 million, or 40 cents per share, in the year-ago period.

The company, which is trying to entice teen consumers with a catalog to be launched in August, last month had ratcheted up its earnings target by a penny. *Reuters*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People, Events & Products

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Patterned reviews ongoing at Ahead

AHEAD, the country's leader in tutorial and review services, will conduct patterned review courses for the college entrance exams of UP, Ateneo and La Salle from April to October at various review centers and venues in Metro Manila.

Ahead is the only center that offers real patterned review courses that prepare students for the actual subjects, time limits, and test types of specific entrance tests. While other centers just cover the topics in the high school curriculum, Ahead reviews students on what really comes out in the exams. Ahead's clients are, therefore, ready for the right subjects, and the right exam.

Ahead's lecturers are honor graduates of UP and Ateneo. They know very well what it takes to score high in college entrance tests and can give the best test-taking tips and shortcuts. Young students are able to relate easily with them because they are also young, upbeat, and highly personable.

Its patterned review courses have been so effective that Ahead is recommended by an increasing number of students, parents, teachers and principals every year. Ahead remains the only one in the industry that publishes an annual Passer's List, proof of its commitment to quality and excellence.

Getting into UP, Ateneo, and La Salle is a student's ticket to countless opportunities. These schools are considered the best in the country because of their superior curriculum, reputable faculty, and dynamic campus activities. Graduates of these schools have a clear advantage, especially in job seeking and employment. Entering these schools, however, requires preparation-the right preparation that only Ahead provides.

Review courses are conducted in the following venues: Katipunan Avenue in Loyola Heights, Greenhills, SM Megamall, Rockwell Drive, Alabang, and Taft Avenue.

For registration and inquiries, visit Ahead at any of its branches (Katipunan Avenue, Greenhills, SM Megamall, and soon-to-open Robinsons Galleria), or call 426-0034 to 36.

HEALTHSTREAM'S 7-DAY EXHIBIT

Miss Chinatown Grace Lee, assisted by TV and print commercial model JC Dacuycuy, cut the ceremonial ribbon at the product launching and opening of the 7-day exhibit of Healthstream International fitness products at the Megamall A Atrium recently. Assisting them are (from left) Healthstream marketing officer Maureen Belleza and regional manager for Philippine operations Carol Valdez. Catis Philippines Inc. is the sole distributor of Healthstream products and its showroom is located at Unit 2, ground floor, Bayview Tower 2, Roxas Boulevard, Paranaque. For more details, call 855-8308/09.

Union declares P51-M net income in 2002

UNION Cement Corp. reported a significant increase in 2002 revenues following the consolidation of Alsons Cement into its operation and the turnaround of cement demand after five years of continuous decline since the start of the Asian financial crisis in July 1997.

"Union Cement capitalized on its strong balance sheet to take advantage of the growth opportunities in the market place. The acquisition of Alsons Cement was one of those opportunities that the company identified, which is considered very strategic and timely considering the turnaround of market demand and the reduction in imports due to the provisional tariff of P20.60 per bag imported by the government," said Union's chief operating officer Paul O'Callaghan.

As reported by the company in its special shareholders meeting in September 2002, the acquisition of Alsons Cement by Union was done through a share for a share swap transaction and only a small amount of cash was used to pay minority shareholders who availed themselves of the tender offer for cash instead of Union shares.

Union ended the year with a consolidated net income of P51 million after deducting depreciation, interest and foreign exchange losses of P2.7 billion. On a parent company level, Union Cement made P311 million in net profit that was almost the same as 2001.

Union is a fully integrated cement manufacturing operation with plants strategically located in the Philippines-two in Mindanao, in Lugalt, Misamis Oriental and Davao City, and 2 in Luzon, La Union and Bulacan.

Union is a member of Holcim-one of the world's leading suppliers of cement as well as aggregates, concrete and construction-related services, with interests in over 70 countries in all continents.

THE MOST AWARDED PR AGENCY

Agatep Associates Inc. (AAI) president Charlie Agatep (in suit), general manager Audrey General (center) and the PR agency's staff display the 8 Anvils AAI won for their clients during the recent 38th Anvil Awards. The trophies include six Anvil Awards of Excellence for most outstanding PR programs, one Anvil Award of Merit for outstanding PR tool, and the coveted Bronze Anvil Award for the most outstanding PR tactics, which is at par with the Grand Anvil. The Anvil Awards competition is considered the 'Oscar' of the PR industry and is held annually by the Public Relations Society of the Philippines to recognize exceptional PR programs implemented the previous year.

BPI 'RP'S BEST RETAIL BANK'

The Bank of the Philippine Islands was named best retail bank in the Philippines for 2002 by the Asian Banker, an integrated intelligence company that is the region's most authoritative provider of strategic business intelligence for the financial services community. BPI posted an impressive 72-percent increase in net income and managed to increase its consumer loans by 13 percent on a year-to-date basis despite the contraction of the local consumer loan market. BPI SEVP Aurelio Montinola III receives the award from Asian Banker's Emmanuel Daniel, research managing director and editor-in-chief, at the Manila Peninsula Hotel.

1ST INTERNATIONAL BEACH TOURNEY SCORES A VICTORY

Beach ultimate, one of the most engaging outdoor activities, recently scored a touchdown of sorts in the 1st International Beach Ultimate Tournament. The first in Nova's Ultimate Frisbee Series, the tourney's smashing success was a result of 10 teams from as far as North America and Europe joining the event with teams from Bangkok and Hong Kong. Korea sent two squads, while the Philippines fielded four-two from Boracay and two from Manila. Boracay proved the perfect ultimate haven. Shown are the members of eventual champ Hong Kong All Stars, who creamed homegrown talents Boracay Dragons. The event was also presented by Nestle Ice Cream, Nesvita, RX 93.1, Cebu Pacific and Ford Motors Philippines.

NEW LACTACYD SPOKESPERSONS

Movie actress Rosanna Roces (center) and TV host Suzie Entrata-Abrera (right) ink an agreement with Sanofi-Synthelabo Philippines to be the official spokespersons for Lactacyd, the number one prescribed feminine wash by gynecologists in the country. Also at the signing held in Oakwood, Makati City, were Sanofi-Synthelabo director Caloy Realuyo (seated left), (standing from left) Lactacyd senior product manager Arla Ampil, marketing manager Penn Policarpio, communications manager Cheryl Ann Serrano, and Publicis-AMA VP account director Penn Roque. Sanofi-Synthelabo is one of the world's leading firms in medical research and development. Lactacyd was developed in France.

Free orientations from Prima Care this April

PRIMA Care Training and Development Center, a Quezon City-based skills training center for caregivers, is conducting its free orientation sessions for six-month training courses for caregiver employment abroad.

Prima Care officials said countries such as Canada and Ireland, among others, are currently holding live-in caregiver programs (LCPs)-special programs designed to bring foreign workers to their countries to do live-in work as caregivers when there are not enough locals to fill available positions.

They added that caregiver graduates of the center who become successful applicants abroad then receive employment authorizations allowing them to work in the said countries as live-in caregivers.

Prima Care is offering the courses at its main office at 85C West Avenue corner Baler Street, Quezon City (telephone number 373-2782 or 414-8249) and at its Metro Manila branches in Legaspi Village, Makati (818-1568 or 819-1052), Caloocan (366-7040), and Cainta (240-3969).

According to the center, the LCPs also specify protection rights for the caregiver, with the same legal rights as the locals for fair working conditions and fair treatment from their employers.

CONVERSE FASHION SHOW

Converse's latest summer collection was featured April 4 in a fashion show at SM Southmall. Shown are just some of the cool fashion statements for boys and girls.

ProductFILES

Football authority introduces casual line

UMBRO, the name trusted by professional and world-class football players, is now in the Philippines. Tagged the football authority, Umbro brings to the country its own special line of casual wear, footwear, and accessories suitable for the cool, young, and active Filipino lifestyle.

Umbro International was established in 1924 in Cheshire (England), and has grown into a world-leading football brand, producing apparel, footwear and equipment designed specifically for football. Unknown to many, Umbro has its own distinct collection of casual wear and footwear that will make the trendy generation stand out.

Exclusively distributed by Reximtra Inc., Umbro is available at Royal Sporting House outlets-Ayala in Cebu, Festival Mall, Glorietta 4, Isetann-Recto, Robinsons Place Ermita, Sta. Rosa and Pampanga, The Shoe Shop in Shangri-La Plaza and Rockwell and other authorized dealers.

Bits Clips

Kickboxing promo

BODYBASIC, the fitness center of the Asia Pacific College, is offering Martial Arts Class this summer. For Karate (12 sessions), the fee for April and May is P2,000. Kickboxing, for 9 sessions, is P1,500, and Taekwondo for 12 sessions is only P2,000. You can avail yourself the facilities in the gym, where there is ample equipment to build strength and cardiovasculat stamina. Bodybasic is located at the 10th floor of the Asia Pacific College, Humabon Place, Magallanes, Makati. For more details, call 0920-6281331 or 0917-9928870.

2+1 Easter special

TREAT yourself to Edsa Shangri-La's Easter 2+1 Special ongoing until April 30. Check in at a Superior Room for only P6,600++ or in a Deluxe Room for P7,600++ for two nights and get a third night free. Both packages are inclusive of a buffet breakfast for two on all three days. Edsa Shangri-La's Easter 2+1 Special package is open to residents and expatriates residing in the Philippines only. Rate is subject to 10-percent service charge and 10.7-percent government tax. For inquiries and reservations, call Room Reservations at 636-9083 to 87.

Jag Kidzone Mania at SM

GET READY for the most awesome goodies giveaway with the Jag Kidzone promo at selected SM Supermalls ongoing until April 30 in coordination with the SM Kid's Fair. Take home cool K-Zone magazines and Jag Kidzone stickers for free when you shop at any Jag Kids boutique in SM Bacoor, Cubao, Fairview, Makati, North Edsa, Ortigas, Southmall and YMCA. Grab the chance to enjoy big discounts on regular items reaching up to 50 percent off on selected items. For every purchase of any Jag Kids merchandise, you get a free Jag Kidzone sticker. And for every P500 worth of Jag Kids items, you get a copy of the latest K-Zone Magazine. K-Zone is the hottest kid magazine published by Summit Media, and features the latest games, products, gadgets, movies and artists kids really love.

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QUEZON CITY

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12T/mo. or 3Yrs No Int. or 10% D.P. LIPAT AGAD 3-5BR 15min Fr Mktl 0917-8169849

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REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE

PASIG

PASIG 2BR P2.7M 9126833

QUEZON CITY

2BR CONDO CUBAO 9120679

Cubao P1.4M 10%DP 9132224

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21st Flr 46sqm 2.2M Neg.
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Eastwood City Libis 1-3 BR Studio Call 0917-5218338

RESD'L CONDO IN EASTWOOD CITY LIBIS 0917-5218338

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TOWER
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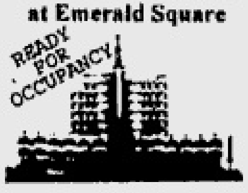

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922-4464/913-7632

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good 4 gas station Antipolo Sumulong 6391694 0917-8102903

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PROVINCIAL

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★SUBIC back of CT Hall 46has.@200/m² 0919221766

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

COMMERCIAL/ RESIDENTIAL

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HOUSE

MAKATI

HOUSE 4BR NR FORT GLOBAL CT TEL. 882-1752 882-5838

SANLO DUPLEX 5268046/49

PARANAQUE

House 4BR Marcelo 12T
Call 8234473 Mrs.Romero

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

1BR 2BR Furn Nice 8966665

PASIG

SHAW TOWER F/F 13T (neg) 26m² nr Shangrila 4578041

QUEZON CITY

Furn 2BR P12T Columbia St See to appreciate 6461603

APARTMENT

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MANDALUYONG

Wack' Royal Mansion
1BR FF Aircon Prkg Cable
Call Philip Tan • 813-2621

QUEZON CITY

1BR Katpnan 6815834/7275728

Cubao Std Lady 3.5 9124428

SAN JUAN

91A.Luna 2BR spacious 9T/mo. good loc'n 6461603

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Bnew Van 6254058 6261045

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L300 T7411356

L300/Vans 578-8917 (Roger)

MARIAN 8969956
CARS CSTER VANS BRDAL

P800/L3 9136710/4333682

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VAN & BUS 9329259-5160

Van 0917-6626993 • 6421840

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1HR FastCarLoan 7125202

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8966633/30

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490

2% w/oTaking Car 3646928

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ELITE PIANO CENTER
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Whiteboard-Elec. 8449500

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Northern Samar
Municipality of VICTORIA

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Republic of the Philippines through the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) received a loan from Asian Development Bank (ADB) for Agrarian Reform Communities Project (ARCP). Part of the proceeds will be applied to eligible payments under contract for rural infrastructure component.

The Local Government Unit (LGU) of Victoria, Northern Samar, as implementing partner, invites prospective bidders to register, apply for eligibility and to bid for the: **REHAB./IMPROVEMENT OF ARC CIRCUMFERENTIAL ROAD PHASE-1 w/ OVERFLOW BRIDGE** sub-project, located at VICTORIA FOOD BASKET ARC.

Presentation of registration requirements per section 16.1.1 of IRR of EO 40 and issuance of eligibility statement forms will be on **April 29-30, 2003,** office hour from Hon. Elvira M. Jumamil of the Secretariat Office upon payment of non-refundable fee of TWO HUNDRED PESOS (P200.00) per set.

Registration requirements and accomplished eligibility forms together with letter of intent must be submitted in sealed envelope on or before **May 7, 2003,** office hour at Secretariat Office.

Eligible bidders will secure bidding documents at the Office of the Secretariat on **May 26, 2003** office hour, upon payment of non-refundable amount of EIGHT THOUSAND PESOS (P8,000.00) per set.

Pre-bid conference will be on **June 3, 2003**, 1:00 PM, SB Session Hall of this Municipality.

Submission and opening of bids will be on **June 17, 2003,** 9:00 AM, SB Session Hall of this Municipality. Bids must be accompanied by Bid Security in the form of cash, cashier's check or manager's check equivalent to 1% of the approved project cost. Late bids will not be accepted.

The approved budget cost for this project is **P17,090,288.33.** Only contractors categorized as MEDIUM and above by CIAP with appropriate classification are the subject of this invitation.

The PBAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or formality, assume no obligations whatsoever or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may incur in the preparation of bid and to accept the bid most advantageous to the Government. The provisions of EO 40/PD 1594 and its implementing Rules and Regulations, shall apply to this invitation.

For further inquiries you can call cell no. 09185212928

(Sgd.) Hon. **ANSELMO P. ALILUYA, JR.**
Chairman, PBAC

(PDI–April 20 & 28, 2003)

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Please contact: AMY at 7217543 or 0916-7671953 or visit us at 384 E. Rodriguez Sr. Blvd. cor. Betty Go Belmonte St., Quezon City, M.M.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT Executive Assistant, at least 28 years old and above, strong English, computer skills, MSword, Excel, Php12,000.00 per mo. to start, work in Makati. Fax resume to Mr. Alex Parker 897-7300

BS RAD TECH-CT SCAN OJT FEM 2640 RIZAL AVE STA CRUZ TEL 7111967 7126452

Direct hire Ofc Personnel 18-45 Coll grad/level w/ w/o exp #4370454 Ms. Shie

DIRECT HIRING START ASAP! OFC/MKTG STAFF 16-50yo w/wo exp COL GRAD/U-GRAD call Tel.9134470 Mr. Peggy

Franchise Company needs mature man to manager and sell franchised chain throughout Philippines. Strong English and marketing background a must. Php 35,000.00 per mo. to start. Fax resume to Mr. Alex Parker 897-7300

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HRD Staf 09169829251 OLIVE

HRD STF 09193808007 RIO

HrdStf 0919-2535623 Glenda

HRDSTF LEAH 09193352395 LEAH

OFC / MKTG STAFF 18-55 W/ W/O EXP ASAP 4345998 JUN

OFC / MKTG STAFF
URGENT!18-45 w/w/o exp start asap! Coll lvl/grad 8967636 LIL

Ofc Staff 09206274118 - Sam

URGENT OFC MKTG STAFF 18-45 w/wo exp col level/grad direct hire 4752637 TRINA

URGENT OFFICE STAFF 18/45yo w/w/o exp start asap direct hire 9614634 PEARL

WORK AT HOME
EARN IN DOLLAR
TEXT UR EMAIL ADD AT
0918-9280182 FOR INFO

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

CAREGIVER TRNG 5271590

FALUN DAFA MEDITATION Wrkshp & Photo Exhbt 1:30PM May 3 Phil Coop Center 90 Balete Dr Ext Cor E. Rodrgz QC FREE! 0919-4047829

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Rommel Go Fuentes was extrajudicially settled by his heirs per Doc. #9089, Page #62, Book #35, Series of 2003 of Notary Public Danilo B. Banares of Makati City (PDI-April 28, May 5, 12, 2003)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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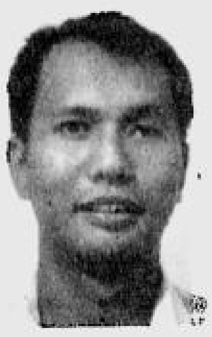
NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



A Warrant of Arrest was issued by the Municipal Trial Court of Sta. Maria, province of Bulacan against **Joseph Geronimo Mallillin** whose picture appears above. Rewards will be given who will lead for the arrest of Joseph G. Mallillin, you may contact any of the following telephone numbers 362-0135; 3303470 or 044-6410792 to 94

(PDI – April 27 & 28, 2003)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PRESIDENTIAL COMMISION ON
GOOD GOVERNMENT
IRC Building # 82 EDSA
Mandaluyong City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), invites interested parties to participate in the sealed bidding for the lease of the ground floor of the People's Center and Library located at Real St., Tacloban City, as venue for "Summer Trade Exhibit" from **May 15, 2003** to **July 15, 2003.**

The bidding guidelines will be available at the Asset Management Department Presidential Commission on Good Government, 3rd Floor, IRC Building #82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City and at the PCGG, Nipa Hut, Jones St., Tacloban City, starting **April 8, 2003.** For inquiries, please contact Darwin C. Altea at Telephone No. 726-0034 and Renor O. Dauag at Telephone No. (053) 321-3413.

Pre-qualification requirements should be submitted on or before **April 29, 2003**, while bids will be received, opened and tabulated at 10:00 A.M. **May 2, 2003** in the presence of the bidders at the PCGG, Asset Management Department, 3rd Floor, IRC Building, #82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City.

(Sgd.) **RENOR O. DAUAG**
Regional Representative

(PDI-- April 15, 21 & 28, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
SEC Building, EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila
CORPORATION FINANCE DEPARTMENT

IN THE MATTER OF : SEC-CFD ORDER NO. 051
: SERIES OF 2003
PHILTREAD HOLDINGS CORPORATION : Registration of Securities
- Registrant -
x-----------------------------------x

ORDER

Upon consideration of the Registration Statement and other papers and documents attached thereto which were filed for and on behalf of **Philtread Holdings Corporation**, the Commission resolved to render effective the same for the registration of its **499,997,540 common shares** with the par value of P1.00 per share at an offer price of P2.00 per share, with **99,999,508 detachable subscription warrants and 99,999,508 underlying unclassified common shares** at an exercise price of P2.00 per share.

Let a Certificate of Permit to Offer Securities for Sale be issued in favor of **Philtread Holdings Corporation** authorizing the sale of the aforementioned securities.

Let this Order be published at the expense of the corporation once in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines within ten (10) days from date hereof. The corporation is hereby directed to furnish the Commission with a copy of the affidavit of publication of this Order.

SO ORDERED.

EDSA, Mandaluyong City, Philippines, April 24, 2003.

JUSTINA F. CALLANGAN
Director

(PDI--April 28, 2003)

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

NOTICE OF DISPOSITION

The **National Housing Authority** is inviting ***Offers to Purchase/Lease*** by way of sealed bids the following properties on ***"As is - Where is"*** basis:

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	BASE PRICE
001	11,570 sqm. Industrial lot with improvements (shipping/port related facilities	Macabalan-Puntod Cagayan de Oro City	SALE: PhP8,192/sqm. or PhP94,781,440.00 LEASE: PhP32.76/sqm./mo. or PhP379,033.20/mo.
002	Foreclosed 200 sqm. lot with unfinished structure	Barangay Patag Cagayan de Oro City	PhP465,000.00

Payment schemes for the abovecited properties are ***cash, modified cash*** (6 equal installments without interest) and ***installment*** for a maximum period of ***ten (10) years*** with graduated interest rates.

Bidding Materials can be secured for a non-refundable fee of ***PhP200.00*** from the ***Commercial/Industrial Bids & Awards Committee (COINBAC) c/o the Commercial & Industrial Estates Department (CIED)***, Mezzanine Floor, NHA Main Building, Elliptical Road, Quezon City and the Cagayan de Oro Project Office located at Don Julio Pacana Street, Macabalan Puntod, Cagayan de Oro. For inquiry, please call ***Ms. Evelyn V. Ramos, Manager, Sales Div., CIED*** or ***Ms. Neri A. Subido*** at the following Tel. Nos ***CIED (02) 923-0390, (02) 928-4561 local 302 & 303***

SCHEDULE

A.	**Submission of Pre-Qualifications Requirements**	**April 25 to May 12, 2003 office hours NHA - Project Office Compound**
B.	**Pre-Bid Conference**	**May 12, 2003, 2:30 p.m. NHA-CDO Project Office Compound**
C.	**Submission of Sealed Bids**	**May 14, 2003, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. NHA-CDO Project Office Compound**
D.	**Opening of Sealed Bids**	**May 14, 2003, 10:30 a.m. NHA-CDO Project Office Compound**

The Authority reserves the right to *reject* any or all offers or any part thereof or to *waive* any required formalities and *accept* offers most advantageous to the interest of NHA.

(Sgd.) **JOSEPH PETER S. SISON**
Assistant General Manager/Chairman, COINBAC

(PDI - April 24 & 28 2003)

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The National Housing Authority through the Project Evaluation Committee (PEC) is inviting private developers and contractors to undertake medium to high rise building construction under joint venture in the following project sites, to wit:

a. **Kalayaan Site 2 MRB / HRB Development** located at Kalayaan Avenue cor. Matino St., Diliman, Quezon City;
b. **Banahaw MRB / HRB Development** located at San Martin de Porres, Cubao, Quezon City; and
c. **Andrew Avenue MRB / HRB Development** located at Maricaban, Pasay City.

Interested developers and contractors may submit their letters of intent for any or all of the above projects addressed to the **Chairman, Project Evaluation Committee**, National Housing Authority, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City. Deadline of submission of pre-qualification documents is on **May 15, 2003**.

Checklist of requirements for pre-qualification of joint venture developers/partners and other pertinent documents relative thereto are available at the Office of the PEC Secretariat, 2nd Floor, NHA Main Building.

The NHA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive formalities on any defects therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **JOSEPH PETER S. SISON**
Assistant General Manager/
Chairman, Project Evaluation Committee

(PDI - Apr 28 & May 5 2003)

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For inquiries, please proceed to PWU Taft Ave. Campus, PINFST Office or call 525 0945 or 526 8421 local 178 and look for Evelyn or Che.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY
116 Tordesillas Street, Salcedo Village
Makati City,Philippines
Tel No. (632) 840-4838 to 52; Fax No. (632) 840-4862

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY (NDC) intends to engage the services of an engineering consulting firm to act as Project Management Consultant to carry out the required technical/engineering services, project management support and construction supervision for the NDC School Building Program.

Interested firms are invited to submit an expression of interest and details of their capabilities and related experience by sending their names and eligibility documents properly labeled as "LETTER OF INTENT FOR ELIGIBILITY CHECK FOR ENGINEERING CONSULTING SERVICES FOR THE NDC SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAM" to the following address not later than **4:00 pm** of **May 05, 2003.**

Lease, Review, Bids and Disposal Committee (LRBDC)
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY
NDC Building, 116 Tordesillas Street
Salcedo Village, Makati City
Tel No. 840-4838 loc 265

Attention: Ms. Ana Marie L. Froilan

Related forms and documents for eligibility are available at the above address from **April 23 to May 05, 2003.**

Only eligible bidders are allowed to obtain the complete bidding documents from NDC upon payment of non-refundable fee of **P1,000.00.**

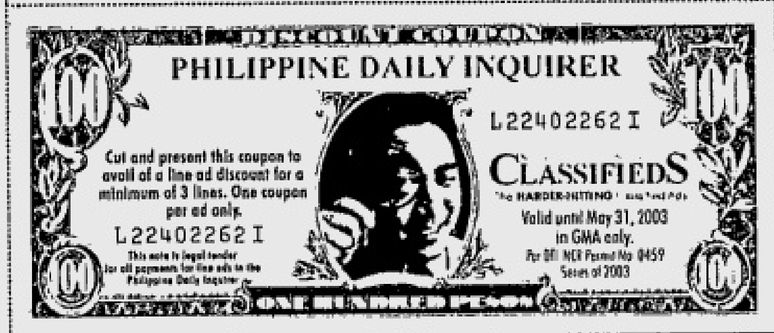
All particulars relative to eligibility, pre-bidding conference, bid evaluation and awarding of contract shall be governed by the provisions of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of EO No. 40, series of 2001

NDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any minor defect therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the government. NDC further assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the prospective bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of the eligibility documents and bids.

(Sgd) **OFELIA V. BULAONG**
NDC General Manager

(PDI-April 28, 2003)

It pays to advertise.
Here's part of the payment.



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B. **NURSES** - male or female with or without experience
C **NURSING AIDES** - male with or without experience
D. **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER** - preferably male with experience
E **COOK** - male or female with experience for a large kitchen operation
F. **COOK HELPERS** - with or without experience
G. **DRIVERS** - with experience

ALL THE ABOVE, A to G PREFERABLY FROM LAGUNA OR NEARBY AREA

H. **OFFICE and LOGISTICS MANAGER** - male or female preferably with experience
I. **ACCOUNTANT / BOOKKEEPER** - male of female with two (2) years experience in bookkeeping and accounting
J. **SECRETARY / CASHIER** - can post fidelity bond
K. **MARKETING MANAGER** - with experience in promoting and getting clients for drug dependent rehabilitation

ALL THE ABOVE, H to K PREFERABLY FROM METRO MANILA

Interested applicants are welcome to submit bio-data and latest NBI Clearance at:
Suite 1407 Tektite Tower East,
Pasig City

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Eastern Samar
MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT OF CAN-AVID
Telefax No. (055) 564-6504 or (055) 330-1528

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MAYOR

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

Date : April 28, 2003
Contract No. SP-041-IN-01
World Bank Loan No. 4446PH

1 The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of Local Government Finance Development and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for the Construction of Public Market with River Landing Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.*

2 **The Municipality of Can-avid, Eastern Samar invites sealed bids from eligible sources for the Construction of Five (5) Units concrete public market building to wit;**

Building I & II (One storey)	– 144 sq.m. each with a total of 16 stalls
Building III (One storey)	– 210 sq.m. with 28 stalls
Building IV & V (One storey)	– 126 sq m. each with a total of 14 stalls
Elevated Water Tank	– 23,000 liters capacity
One (1) Unit Concrete Public Toilet	– 25.6 sq.m.
Perimeter Fence	– 48 spans
Concrete Drainage System	
Electrical-Single phase line 2W secondary and street lighting	

3 **Bidding documents may be purchased starting April 29 - May 28, 2003 at the Municipal Treasurer's Office, Can-avid, Eastern Samar upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Three Thousand Five Hundred (3,500.00) Pesos or its equivalent in a freely-convertible currency for each set.** Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.

4. Bids shall be valid for a period of **Ninety (90)** days after bid opening and must be accompanied by security of **Three Hundred Thousand (300,000.00) Pesos** in a form of cash, certified check, bank guarantee or its equivalent in a convertible currency, and shall be delivered to **the Office of the Municipal Mayor, 2nd Floor, Municipal Building, Can-avid, Eastern Samar** on or before **May 28, 2003 at 10:00 o'clock A.M.** at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend

5 A pre-bid conference will be held on **May 15, 2003 at 10:00 o'clock A.M.** at the **Sangguniang Bayan Conference Hall, Can-avid, Eastern Samar.**

(Sgd.) **HON. GIL NORMAN P. GERMINO**
Municipal Mayor

(PDI–April 28, May 5 & 12, 2003)

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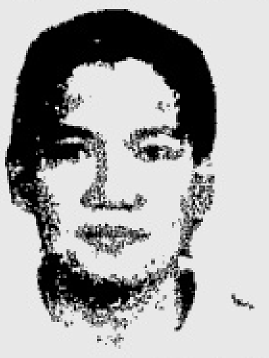

A warrant of arrest was issued by the Regional Trial Court of Lemery, Batangas - Branch 5 against

EDGAR BAYOCA CABUSCABUS

whose picture appears above. Should you have any information regarding the whereabouts of Edgar Bayoca Cabuscabus, please contact Mr. Tony Aguirre thru cellphone number 0917-4721945 or (02) 8988000 loc. 2014.

A reward will be given for any information that will lead to his arrest.

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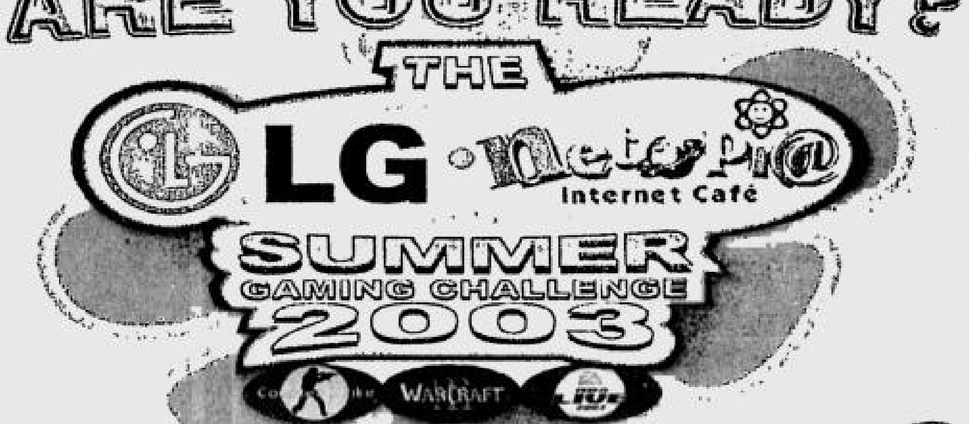

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when a cure was not to be.
So He wrapped His arms around you,
and whispered, "Come to Me".
You didn't deserve what you went through,
So He gave you rest."

Lt. Col. Julian B. Managuelod

Peacefully returned to God,
the Lord he loved and served faithfully

January 9, 1931 – April 24, 2003

His loving wife **JOSIE**; caring children **BAYBEE, BHOY, DEDIE** and **LITO, JANETTE, CHERYL, SUE, MAE** and **GEORGE**; adorable grandchildren **CAMILLE, JUSTIN, JULIUS, JAM, KAITHLIN, TREVOR** and **JULIA**.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Quezon City.

Interment will be at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Caloocan City on Thursday, May 1, 2003 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Arlington Memorial Chapels.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

GODOFREDO C. BERBERABE

September 11, 1937 - April 25, 2003 of Batangas City

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on April 25, 2003 at the age of 65.

His bereaved children **MARILYN, JUN & HAIDE, ALBERT, MARISSA & RICO, MILANI & FERNAN, ARNOLD & NANCY, VIRGILIO & JOSEPHINE, DANILO & BLESSIE, FERNANDO & RICCI, CHRISTOPHER & REGIE**, brothers & sisters, grandchildren, relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the family residence in Arce Subdivision, Batangas City.

Interment on Tuesday, 29 April 2003 at the Eternal Gardens after the 1:00 p.m. Holy Mass at the Basilica Imaculada Concepcion.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation"
Psalm 27

In Memory of Our Beloved

Engr. Nevelo "Bay" Nasis Gensoli

May 16, 1944 - April 25, 2003

Peacefully joined our Lord on April 25, 2003
at the age of 58.

His loving wife **Mercy V. Mission-Gensoli, DMD**; children **Maria Theresa M. Gensoli, MD** and **Maria Meneleah M. Gensoli**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Don Bosco Chapel, Pasay Road, Makati City. Interment will be on May 1, 2003 at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

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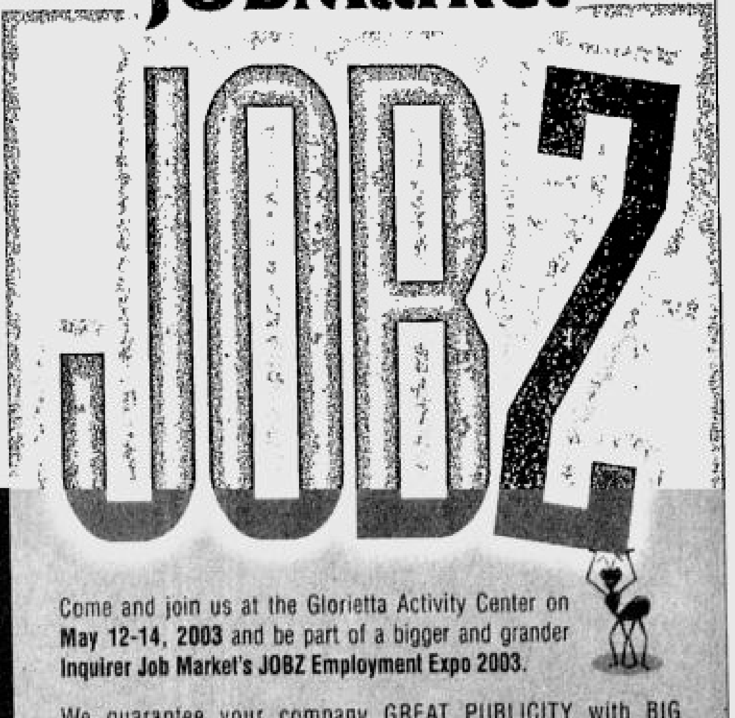

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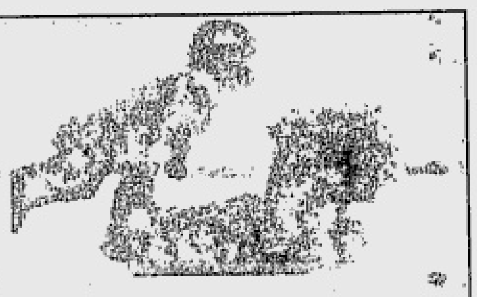

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Thank you for always helping us to remember what is important in life... and today it is YOU!

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Chris

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Editor **Leo Magno**

DOJ pursues case vs RP-based online porn website run by American

Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has filed a criminal case against the owner of a company that was discovered to be running an online adult interactive entertainment operation in Metro Manila, an official told INQ7.net.

The case against the owner, identified only as "Christian John Cole," has been elevated to the DOJ after a preliminary investigation found probable cause to merit a criminal case against the American national, according to National Bureau of Investigation special agent Albert Froilan Gaerlan. Gaerlan was the NBI officer handling the case before it was elevated to the justice department, where it is currently pending.

The American is facing criminal raps for violating Article 201 of the Philippine Revised Penal Code, a law which prohibits exhibition or publication of pornographic materials, among others.

The criminal complaint is related to Cole's alleged involvement in a business distributing pornography on the Internet, Gaerlan added.

Gaerlan said the NBI first filed a criminal complaint against Cole following a raid on his operations in a posh village in Makati City last year.

Cole is the alleged owner of a company called Net Ventures International, which was selling interactive pornographic videos of Filipino women through the Internet. Records show that Net Ventures was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission back in 1999.

Recruiting women mostly from the Visayas region, Net Ventures' operations was tagged by authorities as the "biggest online pornography ring in the country" so far uncovered. NBI agents estimate that the online porn operations earn anywhere between P100 million and P200 million a year.

Following a preliminary investigation by Philippine courts, the case of Cole's involvement in the pornography ring was elevated to a regional trial court in Makati, Gaerlan said. He added that Cole has already appeared before local courts in response to the case filed against him.

Tech groups slam results of Comelec automation bidding

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

SEVERAL groups and individuals representing information technology organizations in the Philippines said the recent bidding and the subsequent awarding of the contract to supply counting machines for the country's electoral modernization should be declared "null and void."

In an interview, Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines (ITFP) president Ma. Corazon Akol said the two bidders for phase two of the P3-billion project should be disqualified because they both failed to satisfy the requirements outlined by the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

Akol is one of the private sector representatives of an advisory council created under Republic Act 8436, or the law mandating Comelec to use an automated election system for the national elections.

The advisory council is composed of one representative from ITFP, two from the Philippine Computer Society, one from the Department of Science and Technology and one from the UP College of Engineering

Akol said both the MegaPacific-led consortium and TIM-led group have entered bids that merely satisfied parts of the requirements of the project.

Still, the Comelec recently declared MegaPacific winner of the contract to supply the agency some 2,700 counting machines. MegaPacific, through its Korean partner SK, will provide Comelec the counting machines for the 2004 elections.

Akol said the Comelec did not consult the advisory council in the evaluation of bids for the project.

In a separate interview, Augusto Lagman—an IT professional and member of the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel)—disclosed that there is a white paper about the bidding which is circulating on the Internet. Lagman said the white paper casts a "shadow of doubt" on the bidding and awarding of the supply deal for the counting machines.

"The white paper said that the bidding was defective. It said that the winner of the bid submitted a prototype counting machine for testing by government," Lagman said.

In a document obtained by INQ7.net, Comelec requires that "counting machines should have been used in at least one political exercise with no less than 20 million voters."

Documents obtained by INQ7.net noted that TIM also failed to satisfy requirements of the bid since it could only provide counting machines to the National Capital Region and Mindanao.

The Comelec requires nationwide coverage, documents showed.

Warning raised on refilled ink cartridges

By Joel D. Pinaroc

CONSUMERS who may want to save on printer ink costs by using "recycled" or refilled ink cartridges are at risk of damaging their printers, thus incurring more costs in the long run.

According to printer maker Canon, aside from the physical damages that recycled ink cartridges can cause to printer components such as printer machine heads, consumers also risk losing the warranty that comes along with the printers they bought.

Refilled ink cartridges are becoming popular in the Philippines, since the retail prices of these recycled products are about one fourth of the price of their "original" counterparts.

Refilled ink peddlers have

WARNING/B17

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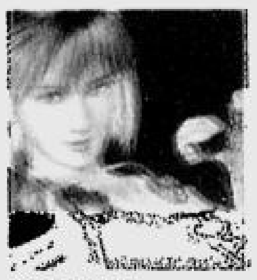
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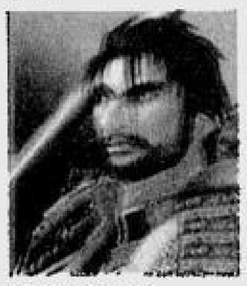
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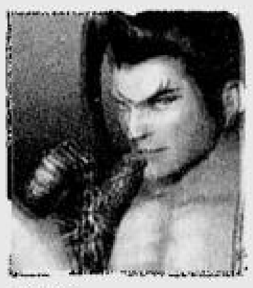
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Soul of a new fighting game

By Joey G. Alarilla

FINALLY, after almost two years, the Xbox has a fighting game that's better than Dead or Alive 3.

Okay, that sounds like shameless hype, but Namco's Soul Calibur/Soul Edge/Soul Blade (Soul Edge was the original Japanese title of Soul Blade—long story) 3D fighting game has always had a reputation for being both gorgeous and deep. Soul Calibur II was one of the most anticipated titles on the Xbox (and, incidentally, the GameCube and PlayStation 2) and it certainly doesn't disappoint. Whether you're executing a Wolverine-like move as Voldo or whipping it real good as Ivy in her dominatrix outfit, playing Soul Calibur II is smooth and sweet.

And oh yeah, according to at least one site, the female fighter Talim is supposed to be Filipino. The SoulCalibur.com site, however, only says that she was born in the village of the Wind Deity somewhere in Southeast Asia. Of course, Talim is the Filipino word for "blade."

What I have right now is the Japanese version—Soul Calibur II isn't due for a US release until August. Thankfully, the menu's in English, but I'm damned if I can make sense of the prologues, stories and most of the other stuff about the characters in the game since they're in Japanese. This is particularly true in the epic Weapon Master or quest mode, which is sort of the role-playing part of the game because you get to complete different chapters and level up. Not that I really care about, say, Cassandra's motive for beating the crap out of Astaroth. Fighting, like love, is a universal language.

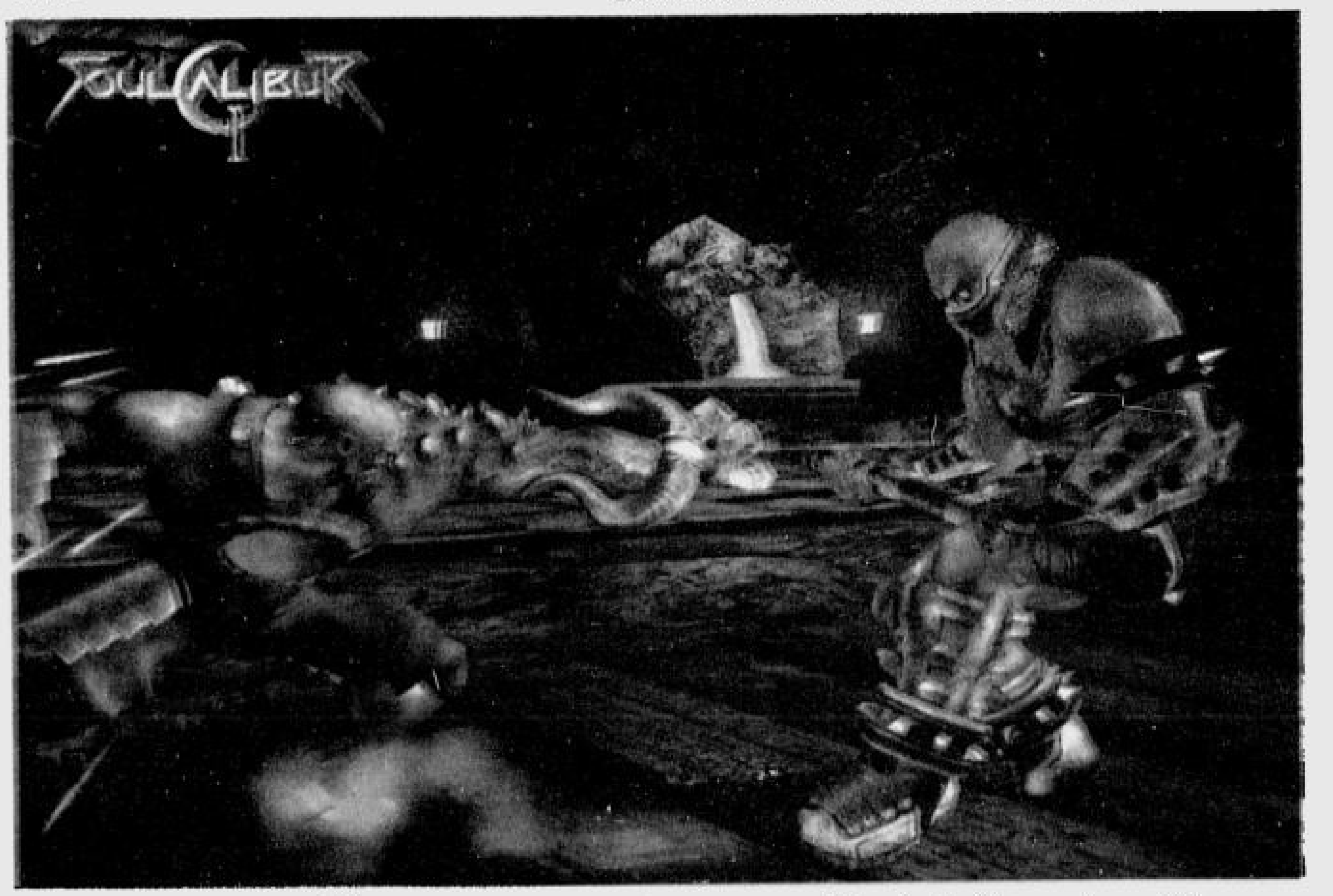
Then again, I do know a bit about the history of this series—I got to play Soul Edge on the PSOne but regretfully not Soul Calibur on the Dreamcast. So let's see: Soul Edge is an evil sword that some claim is the ultimate weapon. It turns out that this evil sword is composed of twin blades—kinda reminds me of the Power Sword and Star Sword in those old John Blackstar cartoons. And then Soul Calibur is another spirit sword that appeared in the East. Whatever, the whole point of this complicated mythology is that different fighters for different reasons have been trying to get their hands on the ultimate weapon, and you get to play these cool 3D fighters and beat crap in style.

We review this game on the XBox

SOUL/B17

NAMCO'S Soul Calibur II gives Tecmo's Dead or Alive III a run for its money.

NECRID is one tough hombre, but so are the rest of the fighters in the Soul Calibur II roster.



'We're not offline,' says Pinoymail chief tech officer

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

PHILIPPINE-based free web-based e-mail service Pinoymail.com is experiencing "technical difficulties" after it decided to move its system to a new hosting facility outside of Metro Manila, an official told INQ7.net.

Pinoymail cofounder and chief technology officer Dominick Danao said that the problems have been going on for at least a week.

"We have been experiencing service interruptions after we transferred our IDC from ePLDT to a facility in Pampanga owned by (Pinoymail president) Doy Vea," added Danao.

Pinoymail's Danao decried speculations in Philippine mailing lists that the company has gone "offline" or has folded up.

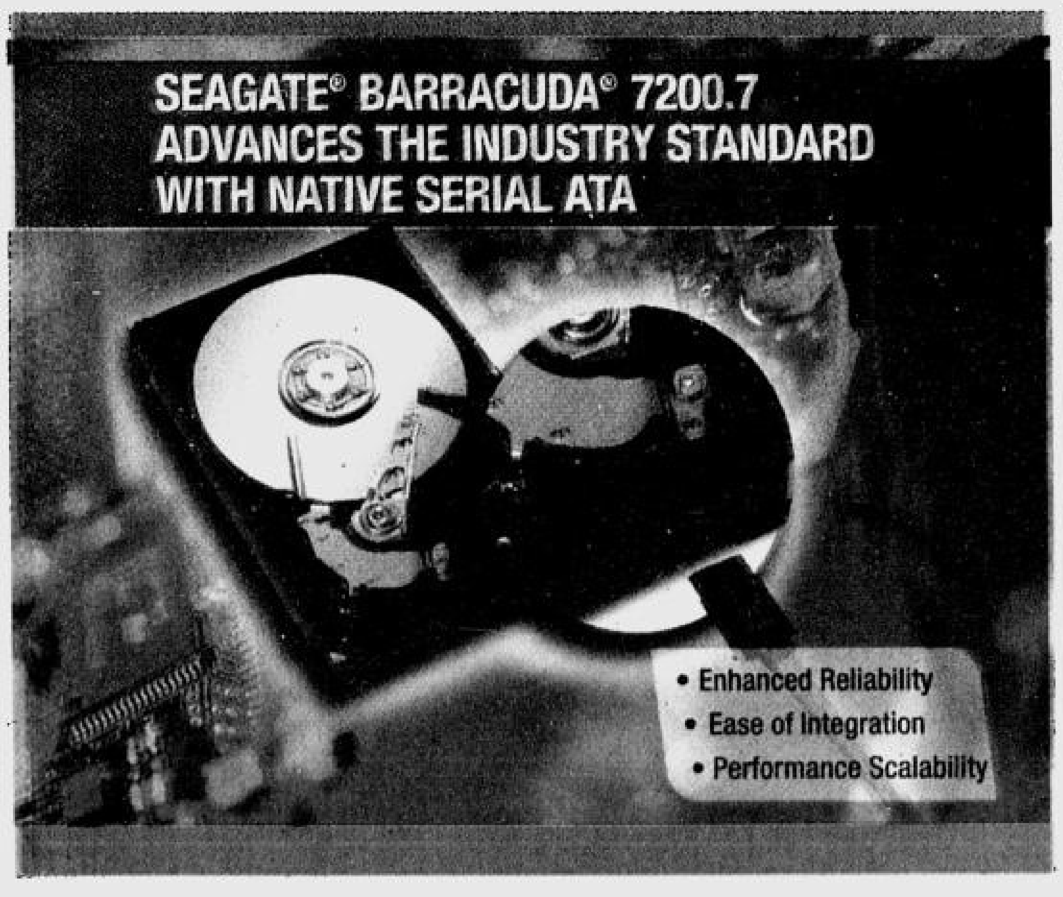
Several postings on the DigitalFilipino.com mailing list noted that Pinoymail.com was inaccessible for the past week.

INQ7.net also had difficulty entering Pinoymail's website as of press time.

"We're not offline," Danao said, adding that the company has recently received fresh infusion of capital this year.

Danao assured that Pinoymail's service will become "normal" by next week, after it fixes technical problems the website is experiencing.

Danao established Pinoymail in 1998 with several friends. In 2000, Pinoymail received a P100-million venture capital infusion from Vea who eventually took over the company as president.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Korean firm sets up cell phone manufacturing plant in RP

By Marlon Ramos

ROSARIO, Cavite—To keep up with the demand for cellular phones in Asia, a Korean company has situated its phone manufacturing facility in the Philippines that would produce GSM phones for export.

Maxon Systems Phils., a Korean-owned telecommunications equipment company, has put up the first global system for mobile communications (GSM) cell phone manufacturing facility in the country that would produce innovative folder-type, color cell phones to meet the demands of scrutinizing buyers.

It is Maxon's first GSM facility outside Korea, where majority of their cell phones are produced.

"We are presently in the initial stage of our GSM manufacturing in the Philippines. We are targeting to produce around 30,000 folder-type units a month. These are to be exported to Asia and Europe," said In Ho Cho, Maxon president.

The facility, located inside the company's three-hectare factory in the Philippine Export Zone Authority complex in this town, boasts of high-technology machines imported from Japan and Germany.

Robot machines take care of minute details of various microchips. Then, highly skilled Filipino workers ensure the quality of every produce. The company actually started its production of folder-type cell phones two months ago. They have already exported 20,000 units to Korea. They expect to produce some 100,000 units monthly starting December this year, In bared.

Last year, Maxon Telecom Korea, the company's mother unit, decided to transfer its technology in GSM production to the country with an initial investment of $1 million.

Maxon Korea chair Sung Bum Hong hopes the "development is not just a mere addition in our list of production items here."

"I firmly believe today's transformation of Maxon as manufacturer of color phones would lay an important foundation for the development of communication industry in the Philippines and Korea," Sung said.

Maxon ranks among the biggest telecommunications equipment manufacturing companies in the world. Its products range from two-way radios, to high-end digital handsets.

It has facilities and offices in seven countries around the world. Its factory in the country has its own manufacturing and sales operations.

The company emerged as one of the most lucrative exporting firms in the Peza where the company averaged more than $100 million in sales per annum during the year 1993-1997. It had provided employment to 4,000 individuals during this period.

Maxon has already sold more than 20 million units of cordless phones to GE Thompson—a leading telecom company in the United States. It also supplies telecom products to big European companies such as British Telecom, Matra and Audio Line.

Its factory in the Philippines started operations in 1989 with a starting investment of $10 million.

Initially, it manufactured two-way radios transceiver and single-channel cordless telephones, which it exported to Europe and United States. As the company expanded, it began producing key phones, citizen's band radios and TV cable converters.

Two years later, it was able to export digital cordless phones, high-end cordless phones that are very popular in Europe.

The company could produce an estimated 250,000 units of various telecom products a month.

Majority of cell phone users in Asia and Europe prefer folder-type phones, In noted. He said this type of cell phone is more reliable and safer than the bar-type one, which is very popular in the Philippines.

"Maybe its because of the price. Folder-type is usually expensive than bar-type," In explained.

But he said their technology would ensure that their products are 10-30 percent cheaper than leading cell phone manufacturers. Maxon has already talked with leading cell phone networks to release their products to the Philippine market next year.

Soul of a new fighting game

From page B16

Style is what Soul Calibur II has aplenty. Even during the PSOne days, Soul Edge was impressive because of its great graphics and smooth animation. Soul Calibur II offers more fluid motion than DOA3 and you'll be delighted by all the moves you can pull off with this fighter. The ontrols are so responsive that you can elect to button mash Tekken-style (the other great Namco fighting game), but the real depth of Soul Calibur II is in the combos. You might have to get used to having two kinds of blocks (the real block is the left trigger while the A button is actually a deflect or parry). Of course, the other great thing is that all the characters use weapons—and some of them are downright bizarre.

As a multiplatform game, Soul Calibur II offers an exclusive character for every next-gen console—Heihachi (Tekken's main villain) for the PS2, Link (yeah, the little guy from the Zelda series) for the GameCube and Spawn for the Xbox. Okay, I admit that the first time this news broke out, I was skeptical—I figured Xbox owners were getting a raw deal because only Heihachi seemed like a perfect character for Soul Calibur II. Don't ask me about Link, though I hear he actually looks great in the GameCube version of Soul Calibur II.

Anyway, seeing Spawn in action erased all those doubts. He definitely looks like he was born to rumble with Mitsurugi, Nightmare and the other guys. Of course, they bulked him up and he has this wicked axe as his standard weapon. Too bad they didn't include his cape—and it still jars when I hear him speaking in Japanese, he-he.

As usual, you have the Arcade mode, where you get to beat up opponents in seven different stages before you reach the final boss, Inferno. What's notable is that the seventh stage is called destined battle—this means your character faces off with his or her sworn rival.

The funny thing about Soul Calibur II is that the Normal setting is actually a bit easy. But all you hardcore gamers out there can stop whining because you can change the game setting to Hard, Very Hard, Ultra Hard and Extremely Hard. I only tried the Extremely Hard setting for Arcade once. I got past the seven stages but that Inferno's tough.

The mode that will really take up a lot of your time is Weapon Master, an earlier version of which was also part of Soul Edge. I won't ruin the surprise, but so you know there are sub-chapters and extra chapters to unlock apart from the 10 standard ones. The thing about Weapon Master is that you start out with a training mode, where you have to perform different moves—thankfully, you can overcome the language barrier posed by the Japanese text. After that, just ignore the text and beat up your foes—you don't really need to know your character's motives, right? Save that for the US version.

Some players might be frustrated by Weapon Master because some stages are really repetitive. What's particularly tedious are the dungeons where you have to pass through 20 or more levels before completing that stage—and yup, each chapter has several stages. What's even worse is that some dungeons have you fighting the same opponent over and over again—what changes is the amount of hit points you start with, the environment (quicksand, lava, that kind of stuff) and other factors. There are also gauntlets where you have to beat three, five or seven opponents in succession to complete the stage. So the Weapon Master mode can be tedious, but you won't complain about the lack of something to do. Just ask my Level 77 Grand Edgemaster of the Basilisk. And no, I don't want to level up anymore for the sake of leveling up—after all, you have to beat Weapon Master twice to unlock everything.

Ah yes, the unlockable content—this is what Soul Calibur II has in spades. Weapon Master is where you get to unlock most of these, including five characters—Yoshimitsu (another Tekken mainstay), Charade, Cervantes, Sophitia and Seung Mina. Now I know what those Pokemon freaks feel like—gotta catch, er, collect them all. You earn experience points and gold in Weapon Master mode, and you can use the money to buy stuff from the shop. Over 200 weapons and various goodies, including photos and videos. You have 83 unlockable items apart from the 200-plus weapons. And by playing the game's different original modes, you get to unlock extras. For example, beating the Arcade mode will unlock Extra Arcade. It goes on and on, so this game takes replay value very seriously.

Personally, I found it best to beat Arcade and Weapon Master using mostly Cassandra, the Greek chick who's the younger sister of Sophitia and Raphael, the Frenchie who may look like a dandy but wields a mean and lightning-quick rapier. Of course, Taki the female ninja is also highly recommended if you're after speed, and Kilik has an unfair advantage because of his long stick.

The great thing is that most of the characters are fun to play. In fact, only Astaroth really sucks, but if you want to do a modified power bomb using his gigantic axe, he does have a certain appeal. My brother-in-law Eric prefers Voldo, though, and swears he'll never play Astaroth again.

So, will Soul Calibur II dethrone DOA3? Soul Calibur II's graphics are gorgeous, but they're not jaw-dropping. You don't have the gigantic or destructible environments of DOA3, but then again, Soul Calibur II allows you to win by throwing your opponent out of the ring so that's really barking up the wrong tree. Soul Calibur II has its own look—closer to say, Mortal Kombat, but this game looks and moves better than Mortal Kombat. And oh, some people were saying that it doesn't have the same quality of lighting effects as DOA3 and even crappy fighters like Kakuto Chojin. But really, do you care about the lighting when there's great fighting?

The potential downer is the fact that with all these unlockables, you only get to unlock five new characters. That sucks a bit. It would have been great to play Lizardman, Berserker and Assassin, whom you get to meet and even play as in some of the Weapon Master stages. The good news, however, is that there are reports that the US version might have more playable characters.

So yes, Soul Calibur II is arguably the best Xbox fighting game right now. Of course, we haven't seen Sega's Virtua Fighter 4 yet on the Xbox. And with all these talks of a merger between Namco and Sega—just think, Virtua Fighter characters on Soul Calibur. Sweet.

Warning raised on refilled ink cartridges

From page B16

also sprung up in most Metro Manila thoroughfares, offering to buy empty cartridges which are apparently meant to be recycled and sold at a lower price to consumers. These peddlers could even be found on busy sidewalks of central business districts like Ayala Avenue in Makati.

"We do not recommend refilled ink cartridges, since these cartridges can damage your printers and make the warranty on your product void," Satoshi Yahata, president of Canon Philippines, said in a recent product launch that the company held.

According to Yahata, refills can damage printers since original refilled ink tanks are pressurized and the mixture of refilled ink cartridges may be different from the original.

Yahata added that there are documented cases of printers going haywire because of refilled ink cartridges used on the said machines.

Since recycled ink cartridges look the same as original ones in their own packages, consumers are gobbling up these products. However, printer companies such as Canon can identify printers that have been used with recycled cartridges, said Yahata.

"In the short term, consumers can indeed cut costs, but in the long term, using these recycled cartridges can only give consumers headaches," Yahata said.

Yahata also said the practice of recycling ink cartridges and filling them with sub-standard ink is affecting the business of printer companies, although he gave no exact figure as to the size of the recycling business.

However, printer companies cannot file legal actions against companies which are engaged in refilling cartridges, Yahata said.

"We cannot sue these companies which are recycling our ink cartridges. What we can do is educate the market," Yahata said.

Yahata further added that printer companies, specifically Canon, have lowered the prices of printer components—including ink cartridges—for consumers.

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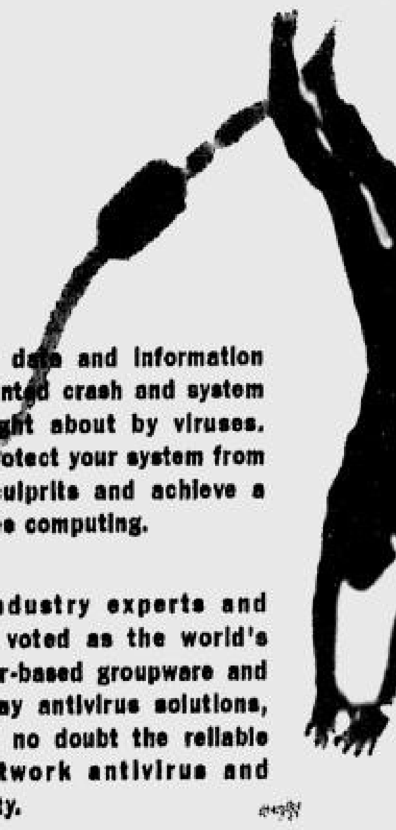

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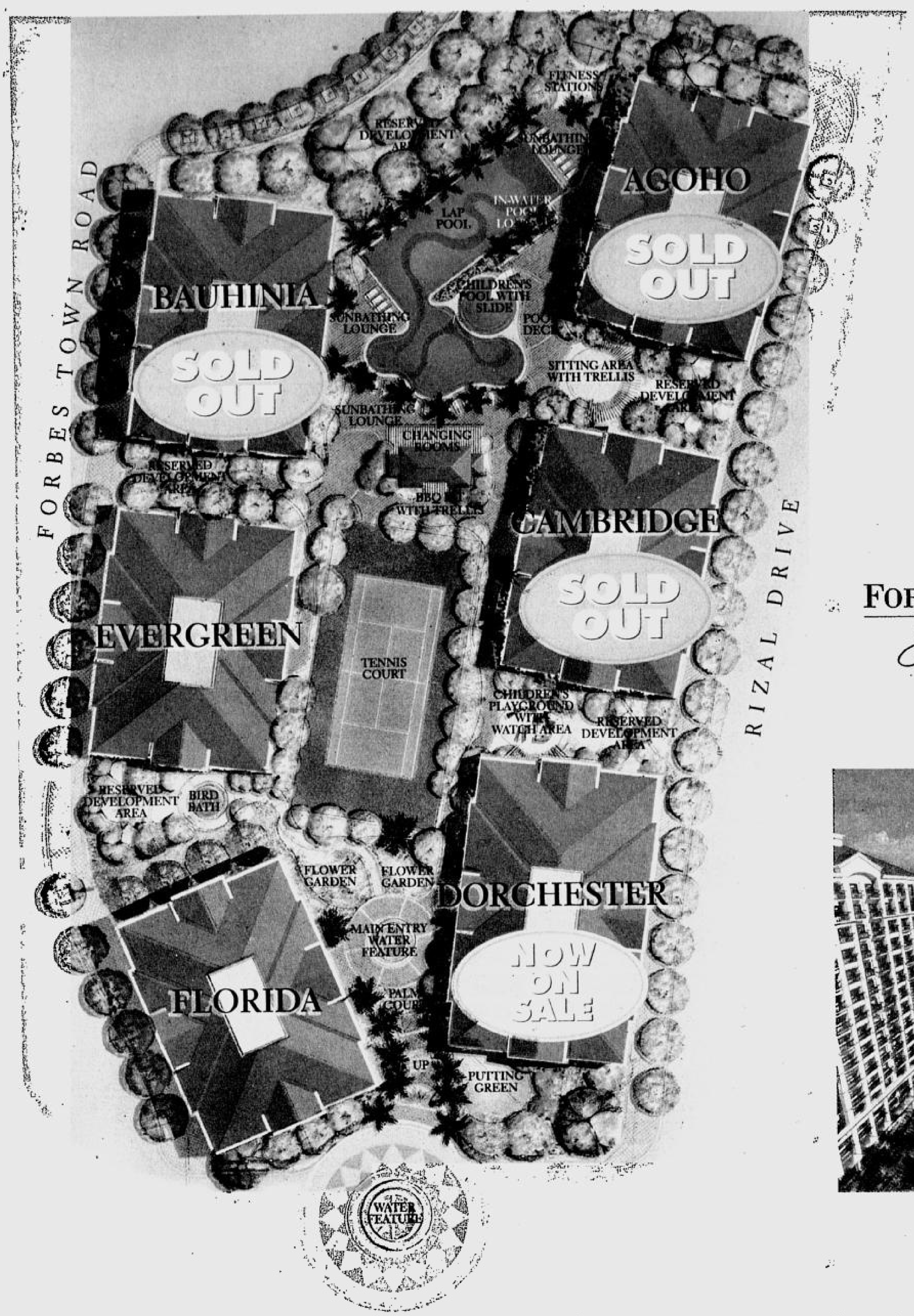
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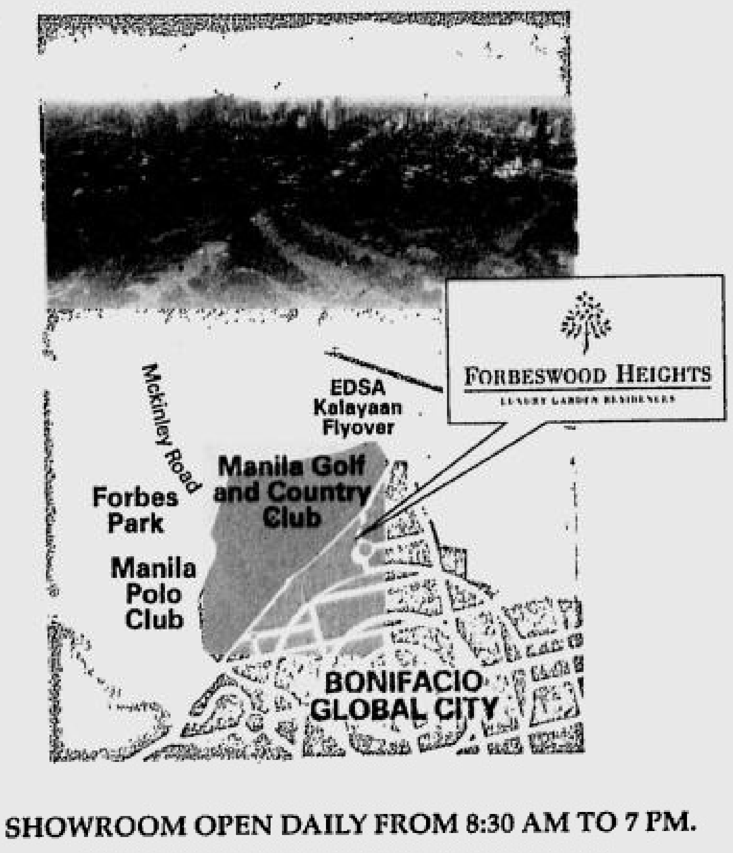
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Pinoy employees are region's most committed

Feedback opportunities are among top people practices

SMART Communications Co. Inc. president Napoleon Nazareno grabs the top spot in the Best Employers in the Philippines 2003 study.

EMPLOYEES in the Philippines continue to be the most committed in the region to staying with their employers.

This is according to the Best Employers in Asia 2003 study, conducted by global human resources outsourcing and consulting firm, Hewitt Associates, in partnership with the Management Association of the Philippines.

Smart Communications Inc. was named the Philippines' No. 1 Best Employer in the study.

A total of 305 organizations and 84,183 employees participated in the study, the second pan-Asian Best Employers study, which researched participants in eight markets in the region: China, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand.

In the Philippines, 40 companies participated in the Best Employers in Asia 2003 study. Ten different industry sectors were represented in the study in the Philippines, the greatest number of companies (22 percent) being in the pharmaceutical/chemicals/health and medical sector. Participants in the Philippines consisted of 35 percent local and 65 percent foreign/joint-venture companies, while 13 of the participants had also taken part in the 2001 study.

Although Smart Communications Inc. topped the list of the 10 Best Employers in the Philippines, it was Discovery Suites—ranked in third place among the Best Employers in the Philippines—that ranked among the 20 Best Employers in Asia 2003, in 18th place.

According to Susan Manalo, head of Hewitt's operations in the Philippines: "In general, employees in the Philippines continue to be the most committed in the region to their employers."

The country's Engagement Score—which measures an employee's commitment to staying and striving to serve his/her employer—increased by four percent in 2003, compared to the overall regional average increase of two percent. The Philippines also achieved the highest Engagement Score in the Best Employers in Asia 2001 study.

The Philippines' Alignment Score—which measures how a company's business strategy is in line with its people strategy—also increased at a higher rate than any of the other study markets by five percent.

The engagement drivers that gave the highest average satisfaction in the Philippines in 2003 were safety, value to society and co-workers. The drivers with the highest positive impact were recognition, pay and career opportunities, while at the other end of the spectrum, drivers with the highest negative impact were intrinsic motivation, value to society and safety.

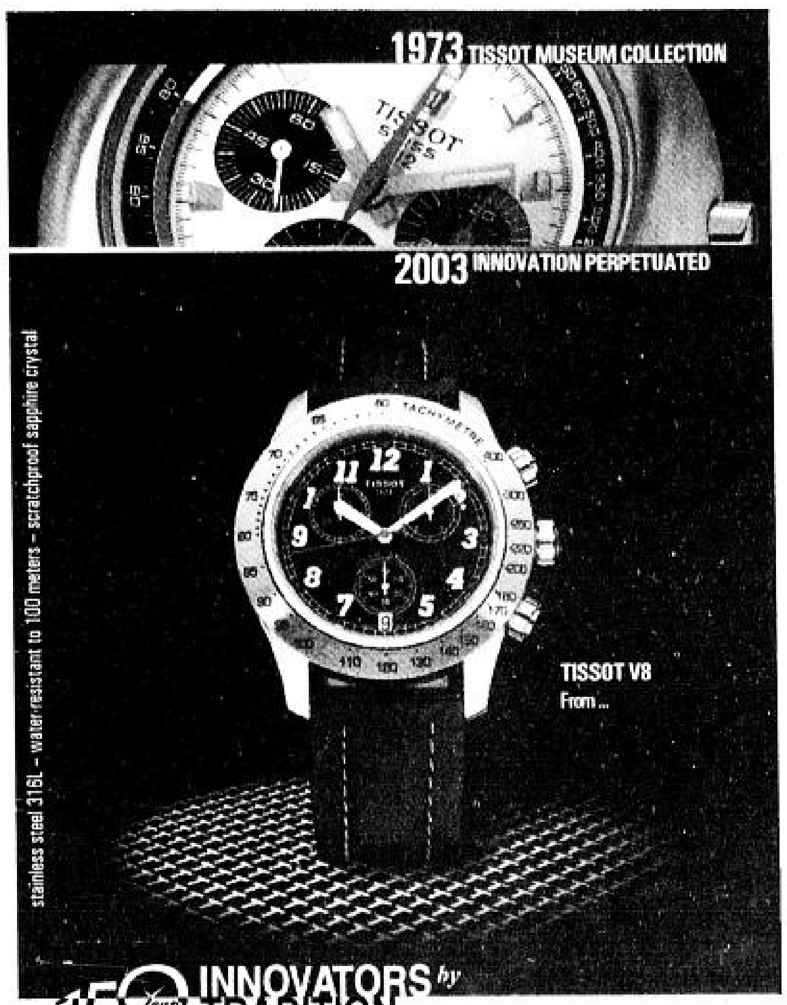
Manalo said the top people practices emphasized by Best Employers in the Philippines were:

- Open and continuous communication about results—offering feedback opportunities for employees to provide insights;
- Learning and development programs that provide opportunities for employees to improve their skills and potential; and
- Challenging employees to

PINOY/ B2-3

PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

DISCOVERY Suites' Jack Tuason gets number 3 trophy. The company also ranked among the 20 Best Employers in Asia, in 18th place.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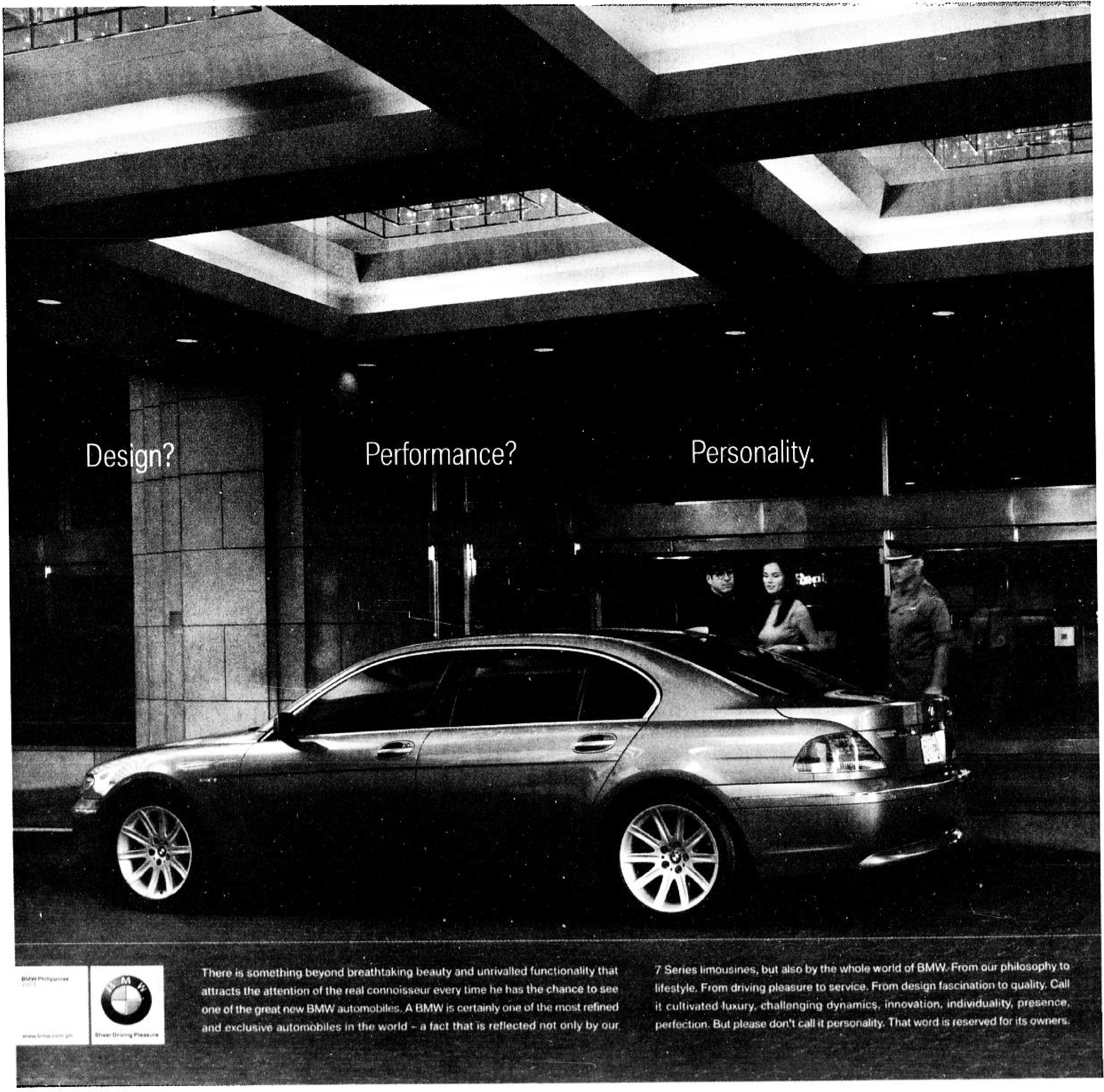

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Aerotropolis: Airport-driven urban development

(First of two parts)

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Felino A. Palafox Jr.

TRANSPORTATION infrastructure has shaped urban growth and form since the days of the Roman Empire. In the United States, urban development evolved in five overlapping transportation-induced waves.

The nation's first major cities developed around seaports (Boston, New York). The next wave of urban growth occurred along the networks of rivers and canals that formed the backbone of America's industrial revolution (Pittsburgh, Buffalo).

Railroads generated a third wave of urban development as they opened up inland areas to manufacturing and trade: major goods processing and distribution centers emerged at rail hubs and terminal points (Chicago, Kansas City). In fact, the South's largest city, Atlanta, originally developed as a railway hub and was first known as Terminus.

The fourth wave of urban development was fostered by the shift to cars and trucks to move the people and goods. Freeways, beltways, expressways and interstate highways generated a massive dispersion of housing and firms.

Large suburban malls and commercial centers, industrial parks, and office complexes sprouted as much as 50 miles from major city centers. Some of these fourth-wave edge cities now have more retail and office space than the downtowns of their metropolitan areas.

The fifth wave, in which airports are the primary drivers of urban growth and form, has already begun. This wave was ushered in by the availability of large jet aircraft and by advances in telecommunication that greatly accelerated globalization; time-based competitions; and corresponding needs for speed, flexibility and reliability in the movement of people and products.

This paper examines key features of the fifth wave and explains why international gateway airports will be as important to urban development in the 21st century as automobiles and trucks were in the 20th century, railroads in the 19th century, and waterborne transport in the 18th century.

While multiple transportation modes will continue to shape metropolitan growth, substantial evidence is accumulating that the major gateway airports are generating spatial concentrations of commercial activities that are leading to a new aviation-linked urban from: the aerotropolis.

After summarizing the underlying forces driving this new form of urban development, I will provide some examples of emerging and likely future aerotropolis.

Speed imperative

A decade ago, futurist Alvin Toffler argued that by the beginning of the 21st century one indisputable law would determine competitive success: survival of the fastest.

In Toffler's view, producing high-quality goods at competitive prices would still be necessary—but no longer sufficient—for commercial success. Speed and agility would take center stage, as industry increasingly came to emphasize accelerated development cycles; international sourcing and sales; flexible, customized production; and rapid delivery.

How right he was. During the 1990s, the most successful companies used advanced information technology and high-speed transportation to source parts globally, minimize their inventories and provide fast and flexible responses to unique customers' needs, nationally and worldwide.

They sought international partners, just-in-time suppliers and sophisticated distributors and logistics providers. By combining flexible production systems with information systems that connected companies simultaneously to their suppliers and customers, firms reduced cycle times and customized their products to create additional value.

They also offered the same speed and flexibility in the delivery process, from the time the finished goods left the factory until they arrived at the customer's doorstep.

The rise of the Internet and e-commerce further heightened time-based competition. As late as 1995, sales through the Internet were essentially zero. By 1999, US Internet-based business-to-consumer (B2C) sales had grown to nearly $7 billion.

According to Forrester Research, 166 million packages were shipped in 1999 by Internet retailers (e-tailers), with approximately 70 percent going by express delivery. By 2003, e-tailers are expected to ship 1.1 billion packages annually, with overall global e-commerce approaching $7 trillion in transactions in 2004.

Most of this explosive growth is expected to be business-to-business (B2B), supply-chain transactions where materials and components will be ordered through the Internet and shipped to next-stage producers.

The introduction of e-marketplaces (auctions, aggregators, bid systems, and exchanges) will greatly expand B2B e-commerce: Forrester Research predicts that e-marketplaces will account for up to three-quarters of B2B supply-chain transaction by 2004.

However, as many e-tailers discovered during the 1999 Christmas season, as valuable as the Internet is in generating sales, the Web cannot move a box. Order fulfillment frequently broke down, and the WWW—world wide wait—cost e-tailers plenty.

To meet the imperative of speed in order fulfillment, e-commerce distribution centers are being built and near airports that have extensive flight networks, a location trend that's sure to accelerate in the decades ahead. Complementing these airport-linked e-commerce fulfillment centers are flow-through facilities for perishables (either in the physical or economic sense), just-in-time supply-chain and emergency parts provision centers and reverse logistics facilities for the repair and upgrade of high-tech products such as computers and cell phones.

Agility is critical

The clustering of such time-sensitive goods facilities around airports is stimulating the further expansion of air cargo, air express, less-than-load (LTL) trucking, freight forwarders, and third-party logistics providers along major arteries leading into and out of gateway airports. All of these functions and facilities are leveraging off each other.

Speed and agility have become so critical to the new economy that air commerce is quickly becoming its logistical backbone. Forty percent of the value of world trade already goes by air and the percentage is steadily rising.

Further evidence that we have entered "the fast century" is offered by data showing that nearly two-thirds of all US air cargo is transported via 24- to 48-hour door-to-door express shipments, with the FedEx hub at Memphis becoming the world's leading air cargo airport.

Not only time-sensitive goods-processing and distribution facilities are being drawn to airports. Airports are also becoming magnets for corporate headquarters, regional offices, and professional services (such as consulting) that require employees to undertake considerable long-distance travel. Airport access is likewise a powerful attraction to service-sector industries such as advertising, legal services, data processing, accounting and auditing and public relations, which often send out professional staff to their customers' sites or bring in their clients by air.

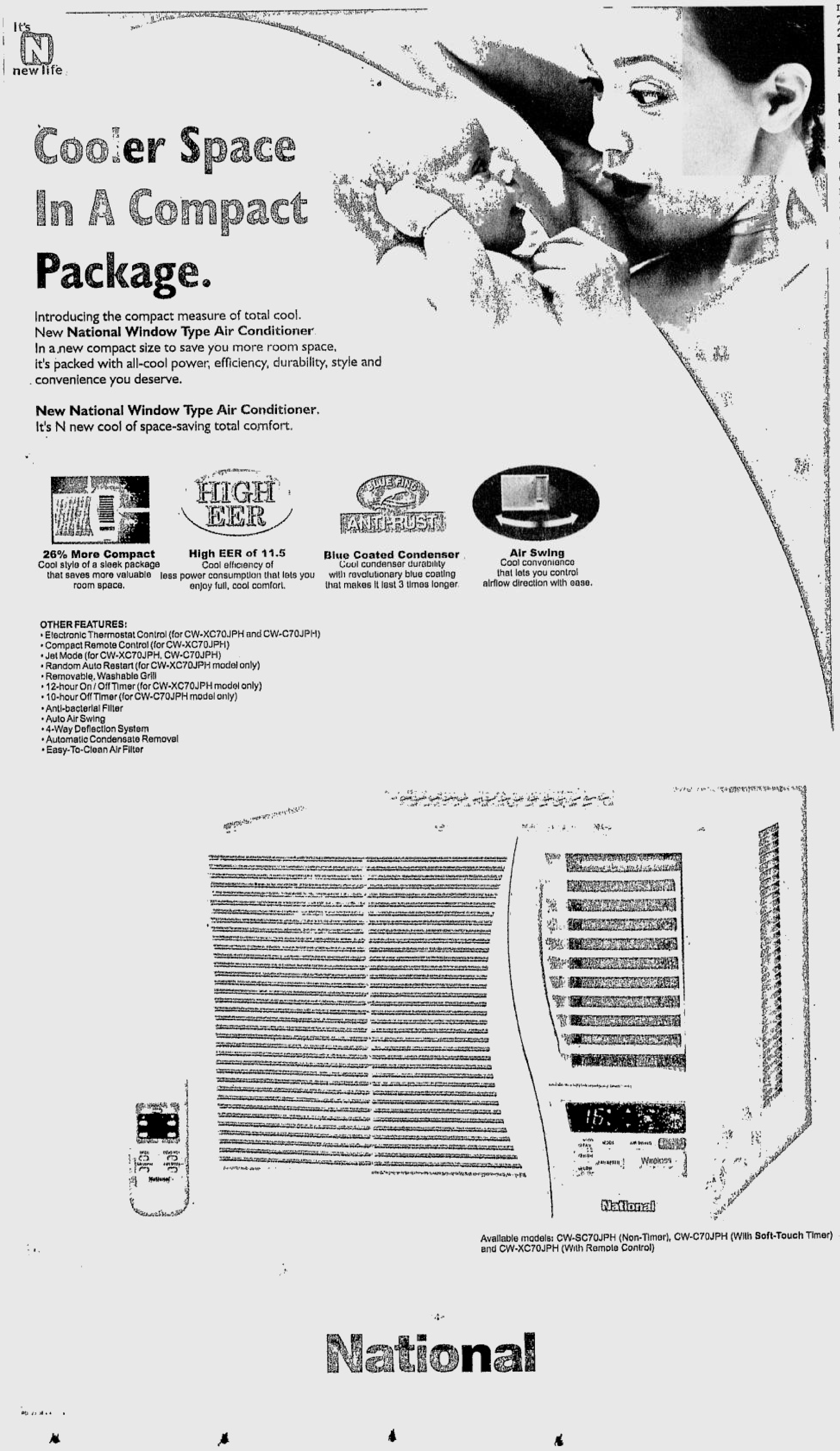
With intellectual capital supplanting physical capital as the primary factor in wealth creation, time has taken on heightened importance for today's knowledge workers. So has the mobility of these workers over long distances. Research has shown that technology workers travel by air between 60 percent and 400 percent more frequently than those in the general workforce.

Business travelers, overall, benefit considerably from access to major airports, which offer greater choice of flights and destinations, more frequent service, more flexibility in rescheduling and generally lower travel-related costs (for example, hub airports make it easier to avoid the time and expense of overnight stays).

Some observers have suggested that advances in Internet access, videoconferencing, and other distributed communications technologies will diminish the need for air travel.

But the evidence indicates that telecommunications advances often promote additional air travel by substantially expanding long-distance business and personal networking. Indeed, innovations in telecommunications technology have generated spatial mobility at least since the days of Alexander Graham Bell—whose first words over his newly invented tele-

AEROTROPOLIS/ B2-3



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National

Pinoy employees are region's most committed

From page B2-1

wear different hats to increase competencies and teamwork.

Despite the relatively high level of employee commitment enjoyed by employers in the Philippines, CEOs in the country still faced a number of people issues. These were:

- Developing and maintaining a high-performing, motivated workforce in the face of change;
- Balancing business needs while managing employee expectations;
- Communicating effectively—to reinforce the culture, to enhance employee motivation, to manage organizational change, to ensure employees know where the business is going, and to provide clear direction and accountability for employees; and
- Maintaining a competitive reward structure to appropriately recognize employee performance.

The Best Employers in the Philippines 2003:

1. Smart Communications Inc.
2. Procter & Gamble Distributing (Philippines) Inc.
3. Discovery Suites
4. Intel Technology Philippines Inc.
5. Philippine Pizza Inc.
6. Development Bank of the Philippines
7. William Gothong & Aboitiz Inc.
8. United Laboratories Inc.
9. Mirant Philippines
10. Federal Express Corp.

A SERIOUS smile from Fed-Ex GM John Allison who was 10th place. Shown with Hewitt South Asia regional manager Ravi Virmani.

MIRANT Phils. president Edgardo Bautista receives the award for ninth place.

PHILIPPINE Pizza Inc.'s CEO Lars Peterson holds the fifth place trophy with Guingona.

INTEL's GM Robin Martin with Guingona. Intel ranked fourth place.

UNILAB's chair and CEO Joselito Campos Jr. receives eighth ranking from Rai Virmani as Susan Manalo looks on.

WG&A's Endika Aboitiz grins as Edward Ferreira shakes his hands. The shipping firm ranked seventh.

DBP president Simon Paterno is congratulated by Vice President Guingona.

PROCTER & Gamble's Johnip Cua holds the trophy for second best employer.

Aerotropolis: Airport-driven urban development

From page B2-2

phone were "Watson, come here, I need you."

Urban land use impact

In an economy increasingly geared to speed, mobility, and global access, frequent and extensive air service has become essential to attracting major conventions, trade shows, and merchandise marts. Two facilities—Infomart and Market Center, both of which are located on the I-35 corridor, between Dallas's Love Field Airport and the Dallas-Ft. Worth International Airport—offer examples of this attraction. Informart is a huge, ultra-contemporary merchandise display building for telecommunications and information technology companies.

Market Center—a cluster of six large buildings that contain nearly 7 million square feet of display space for fashion clothing and home merchandise—is the world's largest wholesale merchandise mart. Hundreds of thousands of buyers and vendors fly into Dallas annually to conduct business at Infomart and Market Center.

In 1999, Market Center alone attracted buyers and vendors from all 50 states and 84 countries, who purchased 300,000 airline seats and filled 720,000 hotel rooms while conducting an estimated $7.5 billion in wholesale transactions.

Clusters of high-tech facilities and information technology companies are likewise locating along major airport corridors, such as those along the Dulles International Airport access corridor in Northern Virginia and the expressways leading into and out of Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. Dulles's and O'Hare's experiences are being replicated across the country, with airport scale becoming a primary predictor of an area's high-tech job growth.

Kenneth Button and Roger Stough conducted a comprehensive study of the impact of hub airports on employment growth in high-tech fields. Their multiple-regression analysis (which controlled for other factors that may affect high-tech job growth) covered all 321 US metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) and generated convincing results.

Button and Stough showed that the presence of a hub airport in an MSA increases the number of high-technology jobs in the area by over 12,000, and their multiple-regression model explained over 64 percent of the variation among metropolitan areas in high-technology employment growth.

Additional analysis revealed that the causal link between job growth and the level of airport services flowed from air transportation to the creation of high-tech employment, and not vice versa.

This finding has been corroborated by research that Michael D. Irwin and I undertook, which demonstrated that airports have pervasive effects on overall metropolitan employment growth and that the causal relationship flows from the extensiveness of air connections to employment. (*To be continued*)

(Felino A. Palafox, Jr. is a member of the Management Association of the Philippines and Principal Architect-Urban Planner/Founder of Palafox Associates. The MAP Secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

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Law firm cited for complex legal deals for 3rd time

By Elena R. Torrijos

LAW firm Sycip Salazar Hernandez & Gatmaitan (SSHG) law firm represents the Philippine legal scene's best and the brightest, if its numerous international awards are any proof.

For the third time in a row, the country's biggest law practice bagged the National Law Firm of the Year award from the International Financial Law Review (IFLR).

IFLR hailed SSHG for excellence in legal advice, particularly in crafting the country's best financial deals.

SSHG managing partner Andres Gatmaitan attributes the success of the law firm to its adherence to high standards of quality.

"We hire only the top students from the top law schools. Then, we maintain strict quality control on work products and we have also developed an in-house training program that assures the lawyers who practice with the firm that they are kept up to date with the latest developments in the legal scene," Gatmaitan says.

When SSHG considers who to hire, it looks at academic records and then at their extra curricular activities. The firm also looks for signs of leadership and the ability to work well with others.

Gatmaitan himself is a classic example of the high caliber of talent offered by the firm. Valedictorian in his batch in the UP law school, member of the debating team, Philippine Collegian editor and Yale law school graduate are just some of his credentials.

In 1965, Gatmaitan joined SSHG. He steadily climbed the corporate ladder, specializing in corporate and tax laws. He has been managing director and partner since 1986.

"I get exposed not only to interesting and challenging legal issues but to a lot of interesting people, too. Law involves dealing with people of all types," Gatmaitan says on why he loves his job.

GATMAITAN

"I think the cases or matters that give us real professional satisfaction are those that have a positive impact on the economy or our way of life. I've told the partners those are cases we should accept even if financial rewards are not commensurate," he says.

"Like we try to get involved in the major power and infrastructure projects like the MRT, Skyway, power projects like the Sual, Pagbilao, Hopewell, Navotas, and helping in worthwhile causes like the Philippine eagle conservation," Gatmaitan adds.

"We're always looking at how much more we can be of service to the community and to the country," he stresses.

Gatmaitan admits it is no mean feat to get the firm's talents to pull in one direction. The firm's talents, composed of bar topnotchers and student leaders, have their own ideas on how the company should be run and how things should be done.

"Most of them think they are God's gift to the profession," Gatmaitan points out.

The firm's scale and size attest to how good his managerial skills are. Some 20 years ago, the law firm had about 90 lawyers and staff but now it has more than 340 lawyers and staff, including 41 partners.

On how the law practice has changed since he was a young lawyer, Gatmaitan notes that financial contracts have become more complex, involving more cross-border aspects because of globalization.

Among the deals that SSHG was cited for in the IFLR award was the MRT III Securitization involving $1.769 billion.

The international legal publication essentially recognized the formidable legal challenges the local law firm faced to sew up the contract.

These challenges include the complex capital structure of the MRTC, MRT Holdings and the consortium of sellers; the number of securitizing companies and intermediary companies through which the securitized revenue flowed; the stringent provisions of the MRT project loan documents and the inter-shareholder issues that needed to be resolved.

However, technology has made it easier to handle the increasing complexity.

When before lawyers had to scour libraries for relevant cases, now a click of the mouse can instantly bring up the necessary information on the screen.

He believes the main problem hounding the judiciary is the fact that it is burdened with so many cases not only at the trial court level but also at the level of the Supreme Court.

"We are rapidly becoming a litigious society," he observes.

He adds that the problem may be not that there are too many lawyers but too few good ones.

Yet despite the public perception of rampant corruption in the judiciary, Gatmaitan says he honestly believes that, by and large, lawyers do not have to pay to win cases.

His own philosophy has been, "if you try to put into practice the lofty ideals and standards that we profess to adhere to, then success will surely follow."

From playing Indians and cowboys to signing deals

OLIVES

WHEN Jose Ramon "Monchet" Diokno Oliv graduated from UP in 1986, he was arm with a B.A. Communications Research degr (with magna cum laude honors), and plen of spunk.

He became a production assistant at ABS-CBN's Public Affairs division. Under Chech Lazaro's tutelage who was head of the divi sion at that time, Monchet transcribed inte views, photocopied materials, dubbed tap and the like. He soon found himself appoin ed as special projects producer for the New Division following the dissolution of Publ Affairs.

In 1988 and 1989, Monchet received su cessive grants from the Australian and Unit States governments to study abroad and e hance his skills. Upon his return, he was m with the news that he had been chosen CNN's Internship Program, which started th year. Owing to his mother's poor healt Monchet had to turn down the once-in-a-lif time opportunity.

"I don't really regret doing that," Monch recalls. "I believe that all things come in Go good time, and between the Internship a my mother's health, there wasn't much o choice."

When Monchet returned from self-impos hiatus the following year, he thought he h had "enough of the rough-and-tumble wo of broadcasting."

But fate intervened. "I came across Ro Cruz, the network's assistant general man er then, in the hallways, and he told m 'Monch, *ano, aalis ka na ba?*' I answered th was seriously considering it, '*pagod na ako sa* news'" Monchet relates.

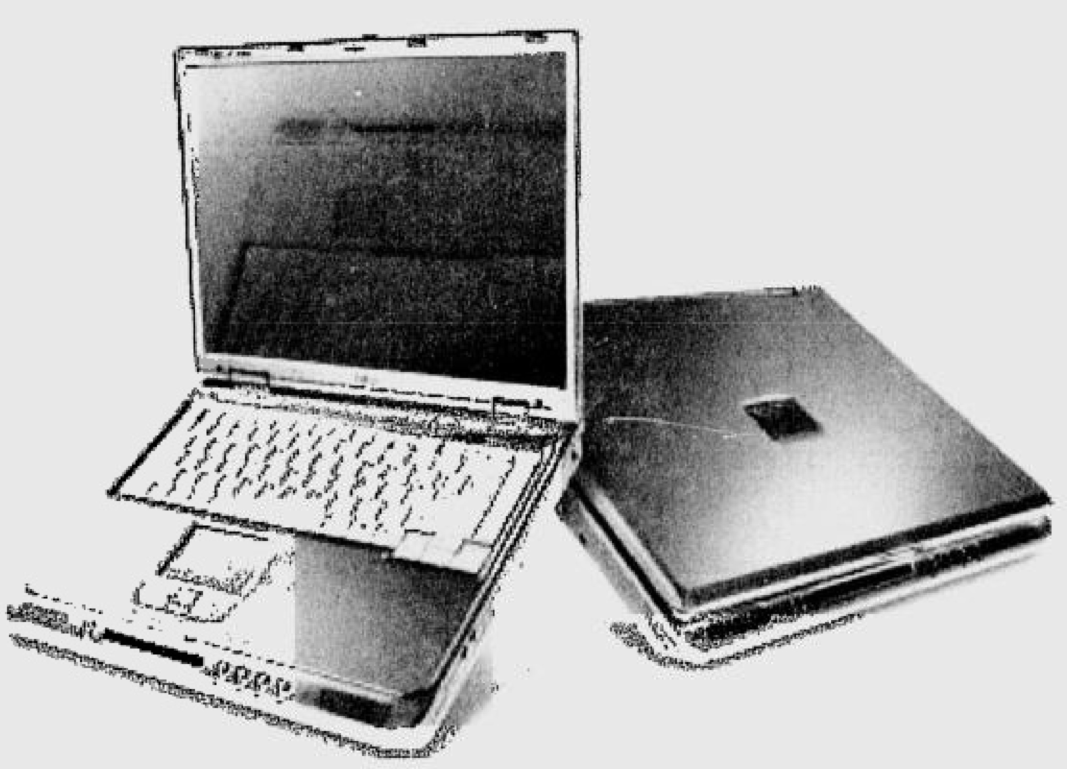
Shortly after that chance encounter, he re ceived instructions to report to the GM's o fice. He was made director for Internatio Ventures. It was the beginning of a new chap ter in his television career.

"Going global wasn't exactly a walk in t park," says Monchet. "I was all over the pla hopping from one airplane to another b cause we were conducting negotiatio However, we knew we had a good thing we stuck with our conviction and resolve an never gave up."

The result of the 'running around' wa post in ABS-CBN's North American Bure "We spent many good years abroad," counts Monchet proudly, whose efforts g way to ABS-CBN Global Limited's The ipino Channel, ANC, Cinema One, and all channels that come under the TFCDi Bundle.

"Those were the days of playing cow and Indians," says Monchet. "I was all g ho about everything." He admits that he mellowed down, and likens his current jo senior vice president for Business Deve ment and Special Projects to being an am sador for ABS-CBN. He spots business op tunities, both local and international, am other things.

FROM/B1



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Awarded as "2002 Best Local Investment Bank in the Philippines" by the Finance Asia Magazine. ATR-KIM ENG CAPITAL PARTNERS is now the largest non-bank investment house in the country. It has interests in Asset Management, Investment Banking & Securities Brokerage.

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These and more are what await the thousands of motorcycle enthusiasts in the first Big Bike Week slated April 24 to 29 at The Fort in Taguig and in Subic Bay in Zambales.

The event is expected to draw riders from as far as Cagayan in Luzon and Zamboanga in Mindanao. It is also expected to draw dozens of foreign riders from Asia, Europe and the United States who have expressed intentions to visit and tour the Philippines on their motorcycles.

Lawyer James Raterta, vice president of Mad Dogs Motorcycle Club and chair of Bike Week Philippines, the organization tasked to spearhead Bike Week's preparations, said he expects some 5,000 people a day to visit the Bike Week Village at The Fort from April 24 to 27 and Subic from April 28 to 29.

"We are doing everything to make this historic event successful. We are leaving no stone unturned just to ensure the smooth flow of activities for the entire week," he told media men in a simple press conference at the Dog House, the headquarters of the Mad Dogs, in Makati.

Raterta said Bike Week Philippines is coordinating with all government agencies involved in maintaining peace and order in Metro Manila and Subic Bay. Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) chair Bayani Fernando, for one, had agreed to be one of the guests of honor for the Bike Week's opening.

The Department of Tourism, for its part, has included the Bike Week in the official activities for its World of Wonders (WOW) Philippines 2003 campaign aimed at luring foreigners to visit the Philippines.

Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon, himself and avid bike fan, described the Bike Week as an excellent vehicle to show the world the beauty of the Philippines. Gordon even promised to lend support to bikers-foreign or local-who would go to Subic for different activities during the week.

"Foreign bikers can even bring in their bikes without being required to pay taxes provided they don't sell their bikes here," he said.

Raterta said the Bike Week would coincide with the 9th Annual National Motorcycle Convention, which will be attended by representatives of different motorcycle clubs in the country.

During the presscon, the Mad Dogs were joined by members of the National Scooter Federation in riding through Makati all the way to the Remedios Circle in Manila to promote Bike Week.

The Bike Week is made possible with help from the Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor), BMW Motorcycles, and Shell Advance Motorcycle Oils. For more details, call the Bike Week secretariat at 890-0027.

Yupangco summer sale packages

ONCE again, Yupangco holds its Summer Swing Out Sale from April 23 to 30. This year, the company offers the hottest. The annual sale showcases widely known brands of musical instruments, professional audio and video equipment like Apogee, Boss, Celestion, Bosendorfer, Boss, Epiphone, Fender, Gibson, Godin, Kemble, Korg, Marshall, Pearl, Roland, Sabian, Seagull, Soundtech, Tannoy, Trace Elliot, Washburn, Vic Firth, Vox, and Yamaha. Special packages await both professionals and hobbyists.

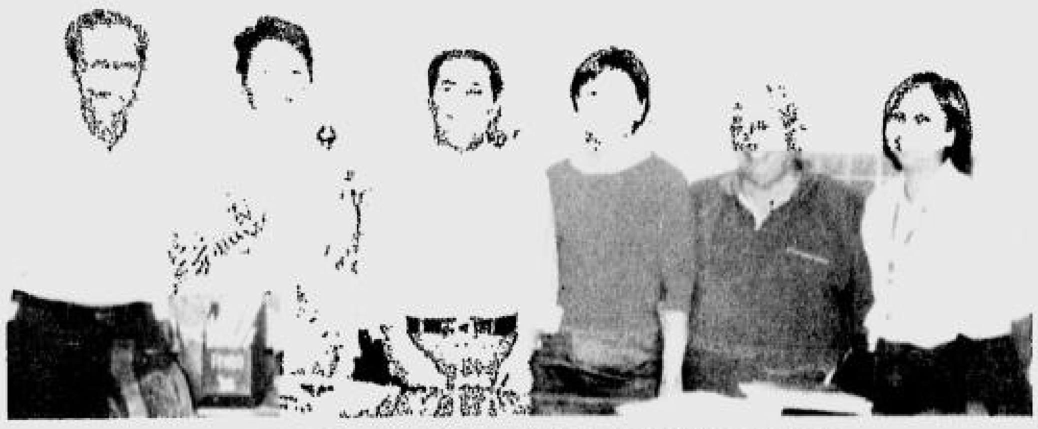
Keyboard players can now take advantage of the Yamaha Digital Equipment package. Imagine owning a Yamaha Motif 6 Synthesizer, a Fender KXR-60 Keyboard Amplifier, a Yamaha KS-1D Keyboard Stand and Yamaha FC-4 Sustain Pedal for only P114,990, saving approximately P48,000.

Roland enthusiasts can also take advantage of the Roland Package A that includes a Roland EM-15 Creative Keyboard, a Roland KC-100 Keyboard Amplifier, a Yamaha XT-5D Keyboard Stand, a Roland DP-2 Damper Pedal, a Sennheiser Gary V Limited Edition Microphone plus the cables that will make you patch ready. You will only shell out P54,990, saving P15,329.

Bass players, on the other hand, can enjoy the Trace Elliot 1x15 Bass Rig Package for only P62,990. The package includes the Trace Elliot RAH300-12 Amp Head and 1153 Cabinet plus free Korg GA-30 Tuner and cable.

Those planning to learn how to play the electric guitar will surely get a load of the Yamaha EG112 Guitar Package for only P13,990. The package completes starters with the inclusion of a Yamaha 10W Guitar Amplifier, a guitar strap, a gig bag, guitar picks and a string winder that would make your learning easy and hip.

For inquiries, visit the Yamaha Music Store and Perfect Pitch Store near you, or call 899-9595 or e-mail info@yupangco.com or log on to www.yupangco.com.



TORRES HIGH ALUMNI MEET FOR GRAND HOMECOMING

The officers of Torres High School General Alumni Foundation Inc. recently held the Second General Assembly and reorganizational meeting at the Torres High School Library in Juan Luna Street, Gagalangin, Tondo, Manila, in preparation for the Grand General Alumni Homecoming to be held in 2004. Shown are Marcelino Roxas, vice president, Josefina Santos, secretary, THS principal Dr. Romeo B. Santos, Nene Ong, treasurer, CY Alcantara, president, and Angelita Modesto, overall coordinator, THS General Alumni Foundation Inc.

CEMENTODO 2003
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MASONS SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Union Cement Corp. and Tesda Region I is currently holding Cementodo 2003, an annual masons skills development program. Present during the contract signing are (seated) Union representative Dr. Francis C. Felizardo, SVP for sales marketing and distribution, Tesda Region I director Antonio del Rosario, (standing) Maricor Cervera, Maribel Sumaria, Rey Santos and Raymond Tadina of Union. The first Cementodo Masonry Skills Competition is being held at the Tesda office in Lingayen, Pangasinan from April 25 to 28. Union is a member of the Holcim Group, one of the world's leading suppliers of cement, aggregates and concrete.

AUN STUDY AWARD

Singapore, through its National University of Singapore, grants scholarships to chosen undergraduate students to any of its member Philippine universities. Shown is Singaporean Ambassador Jacky Foo awarding the 2003 scholarship to Kathy G. Reyes. Reyes is taking up Fine Arts, major in Painting at the University of the Philippines. She will stay in Singapore for a school term.

OFFICE BLESSED

The offices of Petro-Mass Maritime Services Inc. at Herald Building, Muralla Street, Intramuros, Manila, were blessed recently. Shown during the ceremonies were (from left) Fr. James Uy, Jesus J. Oredina, operations manager, Gerardo D. Lopez, president and CEO, lawyer Alan P. Cabaero, legal council, and Federico O. Morana.

BPI's Deposit machines

LIVING up to its reputation of being the leader in innovation and technology, the Bank of the Philippine Islands introduces the newest way to make real-time cash deposits via the BPI Express Deposit Machine.

Starting April 11, BPI clients have been availing themselves of this new and convenient facility located at select locations, like the lobby of the BPI and BPI Family Bank head offices, and the Glorietta Express Banking Center in front of Tower Records in Makati, the SM Megamall branch, and the new Alabang branch.

The new deposit machine has features that make life more convenient for the depositor. Clients can deposit cash without the need for envelopes, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with deposits credited on real-time basis. Bills in denomination of P100, P500 and P1,000 are accepted by the Express Deposit.

Apart from this add-on deposit facility, Express Deposit is able to process transactions like fund transfers, bills payments, account balance inquiries and other special services. You can also load cash to your Express Cash Card.

BITS Clips

UA&P SMN workshop

THE UNIVERSITY of Asia and the Pacific School of Management (UA&P SMN) offers a project management workshop for managers, supervisors, and entrepreneurs from April 28 to 30, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the UA&P campus in Ortigas Center. The workshop shows participants how to spearhead every stage of a project, from developing goals and objectives to managing project teams. It will also illustrate essential steps in defining goals, setting up project plans, assigning and scheduling work, monitoring progress, and exercising control to achieve the desired project results. Mario M. Domingo, program director of PALS International-Global Business Solutions Group and a Business Administration and Economics and Finance graduate of the University of Southern California, is resource speaker. Call 634-2834, or 637-0912 extension 241 for details.

PSLIS training workshop

THE PHILIPPINE Society of Librarians and Information Specialists (PSLIS), in line with its 2003 program for continuing education, will conduct a 3-day training-workshop in two parts: Part I: Technical Skills Development for Library Personnel and Information Specialists at The Corporate Inn Hotel, 1005 MY Orosa Street corner TM Kalaw, Ermita, Manila from April 28 to 30, and Part II - Libraries in Rapid Transition: Technical Skills for E-Learning Environment at the Blue Palm Resort, Bagong Kalye, Barangay Masili, Pansol, Laguna from May 28-30. For inquiries, reservations and confirmation, call Lyn (724-1994), Lily (929-2180); Joven (527-9672), Medy (897-8808), or Beth (932-1295).

Tourism photo exhibit

THE SOCIETY of Tourism Photographers (STP) is having its 4th photo contest-cum-exhibit "Sang Taon na Po!" from April 2 to 30 at the Puerta de Sta. Lucia (beside the Tourist Information Office) in Intramuros, Manila. As an initial contribution to the "Visit Philippines 2003" campaign of the Department of Tourism (DOT), the STP's exhibit will consist of photos depicting Philippine tourist attractions and festivals as well as the achievements of Filipino women. Previous STP exhibits were "Women in Art in Action", "The Things We Did Last Summer" and "WOW Philippines, Windows of Wonders!". The photo contest and exhibit is one of the initial projects under STP's 2003 officers headed by its president, Joe Ronquillo of the PTA.

Product FILES

Eliminating body fats, toxins

C-Lium Fibre

GARSWORTH Marketing Inc. introduces C-Lium Fibre, a natural health fiber coming from the dried seeds of psyllium husks (Psyllium Plantago), also dubbed as 'the mother of all herbs' and 'nature's highest source of dietary fiber'. C-Lium Fibre helps eliminate constipation and regulate the digestive system. Call 524-6549 and 524-8146.

Lotus unveils new regular ballpen

LOTUS, makers of quality writing instruments, unveils its newest offering, the New Lotus Regular Ballpen. Taking heed of the consumer market's evolving preference, Lotus came up with a new design for the classic Lotus Regular. Featuring innovative designs like a see-through barrel, ergonomically designed cap, metal end tip and color-coded end plugs, it is also equipped with a 0.7-mm tungsten carbide tip made in Switzerland and quality ink made in Germany. Available in black, red and blue, this ballpen is expected to gain the same acceptance and popularity as its predecessor, the classic Lotus Regular ballpen. Amalgamated Specialties Corp. (Amspec) owns, manufactures and distributes Lotus Ultimate Writing Instruments

FCCP HOSTS COCKTAIL MUSICALE

Friends for the Cultural Concerns of the Philippines (formerly Friends of the Cultural Center of the Philippines) will host a cocktail musicale at the residence of HE and Mme Raimo Anttola, Ambassador of Finland on April 28. Performing during the musicale will be Nelson Caruncho, tenor, and Lea Capulong, pianist, and MSO member Antoni Josef Inacay, cellist. Tessie Luz, FCCP past president, will be the master of ceremonies. Shown are the members of the committee spearheading the affair. Seated, from left, are Chit Gohu (FCCP director, special events), Chloe Romulo-Periquet (FCCP president) and Fortune A. Ledesma (chair, special events). Standing, from left, are Carrie Bautista, Fanny Blanco, Annabelle Adriano and Nene Leonor.

Jag Payday Sale

YOU CAN still shop 'til you drop--and spend your money wisely--at the Jag Jeans payday sale at Robinsons Place-Novaliches, Robinsons Metro East and Robinsons Starmills, Pampanga from April 30 to May 2. Enjoy up to 50-percent discounts on selected items in the Jag Jeans 3-day sale extravaganza. Get the hottest styles this summer--from teen fave Jag Thug and Lady Thug line to little fashionistas' Jag Kids collection and the classic Jag styles. Girls can now show their curves while guys can look totally cool.

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SAN FERNANDO MICROFILMS RECORDS

Microfilming documents with intrinsic value such as birth, death and marriage certificates provides security of information, and data will be available even if the original paper is lost or destroyed in fire, flood or disaster. Processing of requests from constituents would also be faster because retrieval of images from microfilm would be computer-assisted. The city of San Fernando signed an agreement with Mega Computer Technology Specialist Inc. to provide the microfilming service and document imaging system. Shown with Mayor Rey Aquino are Eridito P. Feliciano, John T. Manago and Jerry D. Aguas from Mega Computer.

Learning management through experience

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

"DO YOU want to learn how to juggle?"

This was the odd question posed by French management expert Jean Francois Jadin in explaining to business journalists the difference between the management training strategy of American Management Association (AMA) and Imperial Consulting from the hackneyed business seminar programs available in the market.

Jadin said a typical training program would go about teaching the basics of juggling by discussing the history of juggling and delivering a monotonous presentation of the different theories involved in the art of juggling through the compulsory slides or video presentations.

"We don't do that," Jadin said matter-of-factly. "We'd just give you three balls and let you juggle the balls while we give out the tips and tricks as you go through the whole act."

Jadin said AMA-Imperial has adopted this "experiential approach" to management training to generate a more lasting and deeper impact in its lessons to increase managerial competencies, develop leadership skills, increase knowledge base, create behavioral change and align people issues with business strategies.

No show and tell

He said AMA-Imperial does not show and tell how managers should do their jobs; it just lets them experience its techniques and theories to help them improve their output and efficiency, preferably in their actual workplace.

While AMA-Imperial also delivers its gospel of people development through classroom, distance learning, satellite broadcasting and technology enabled learning, Jadin said on-the-job coaching gave the corporations the biggest bang for their buck.

Despite the soft business conditions in the country, AMA-Imperial was optimistic that there remained a hankering among the country's leading corporations to hone the most important ingredient to an organization's success—their people.

Training goes on

Jadin said the current slowdown in business activity provided the best time for a company to get its troops through the hoops.

The biggest cost in management training is not the program itself by the lost working hours due to the seminars.

Jadin said companies save a lot by doing the training during these lean times. He added that a well-trained organization has the most to gain when the cycle goes on an upswing.

AMA is a global not-for-profit, membership-based association that provides a full range of management development and educational services to individuals, companies and government agencies worldwide, including 486 of the Fortune 500 companies.

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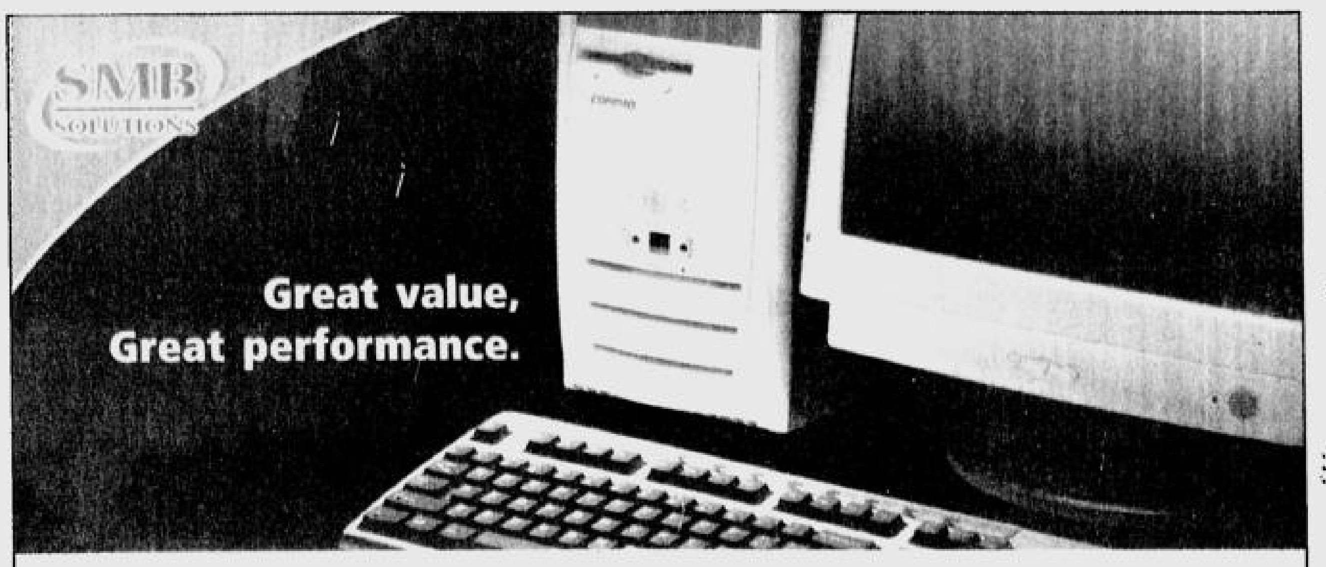
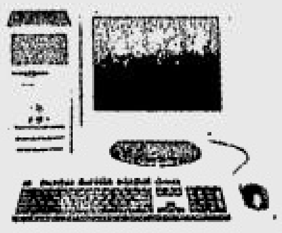
From playing Indians . . .

From page B2-4

Asked what he likes most about the job, Monchet points to the fact that he meets a lot of people. "I can be drinking at the *carinderia* with the drivers and messengers one night, and be at a frou-frou degustation dinner the next. For me, the job satisfaction is in the fact that we serve people."

"Over the years, I've acquired a real love for the job," Monchet relates. "You have to like what you're doing to make it worthwhile." He adds that he doesn't see himself doing anything else, except maybe venture into managing a resort or going to cooking school later on. He vows: "As long as it keeps on being fun, I'm not going anywhere at the moment."





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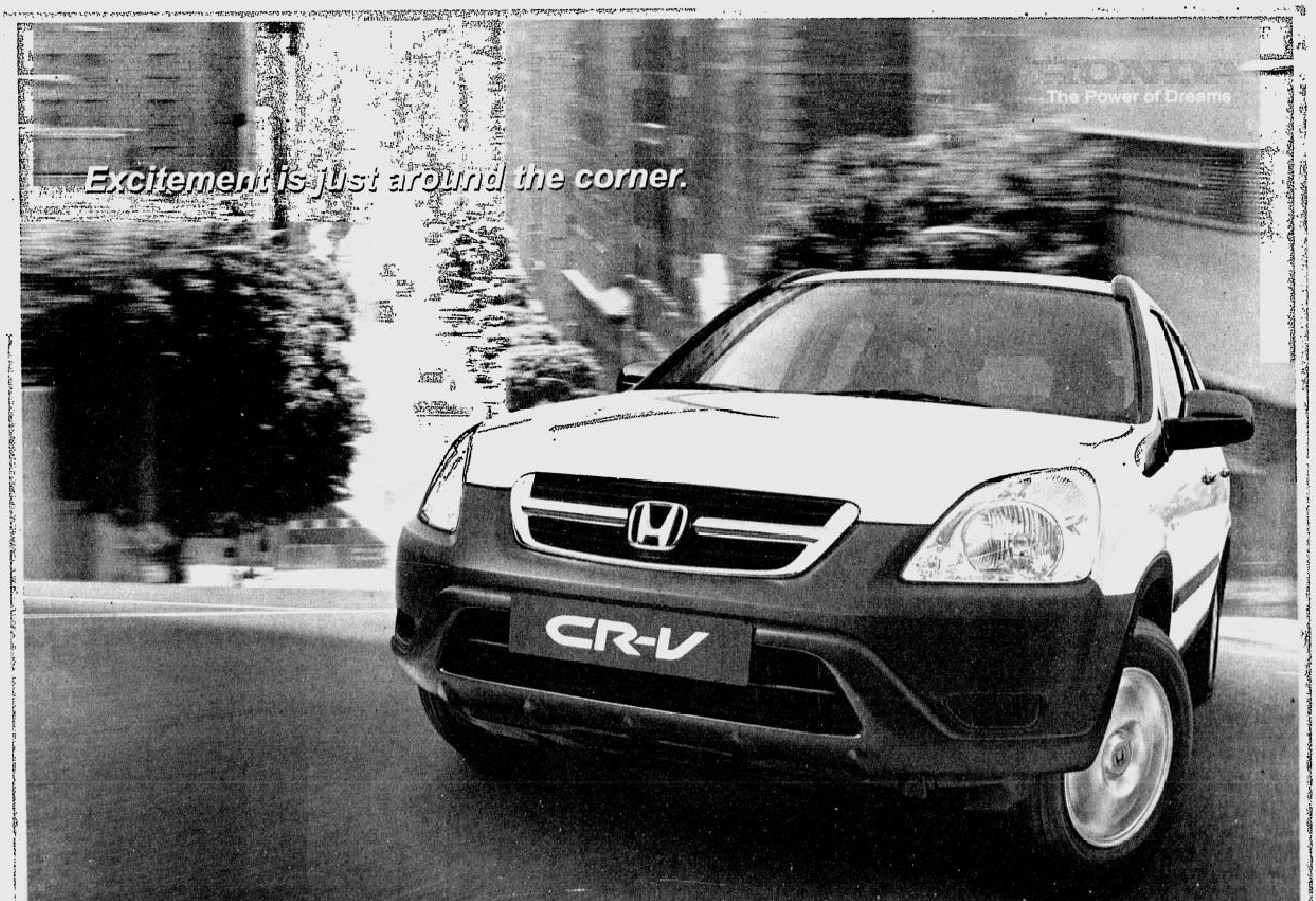

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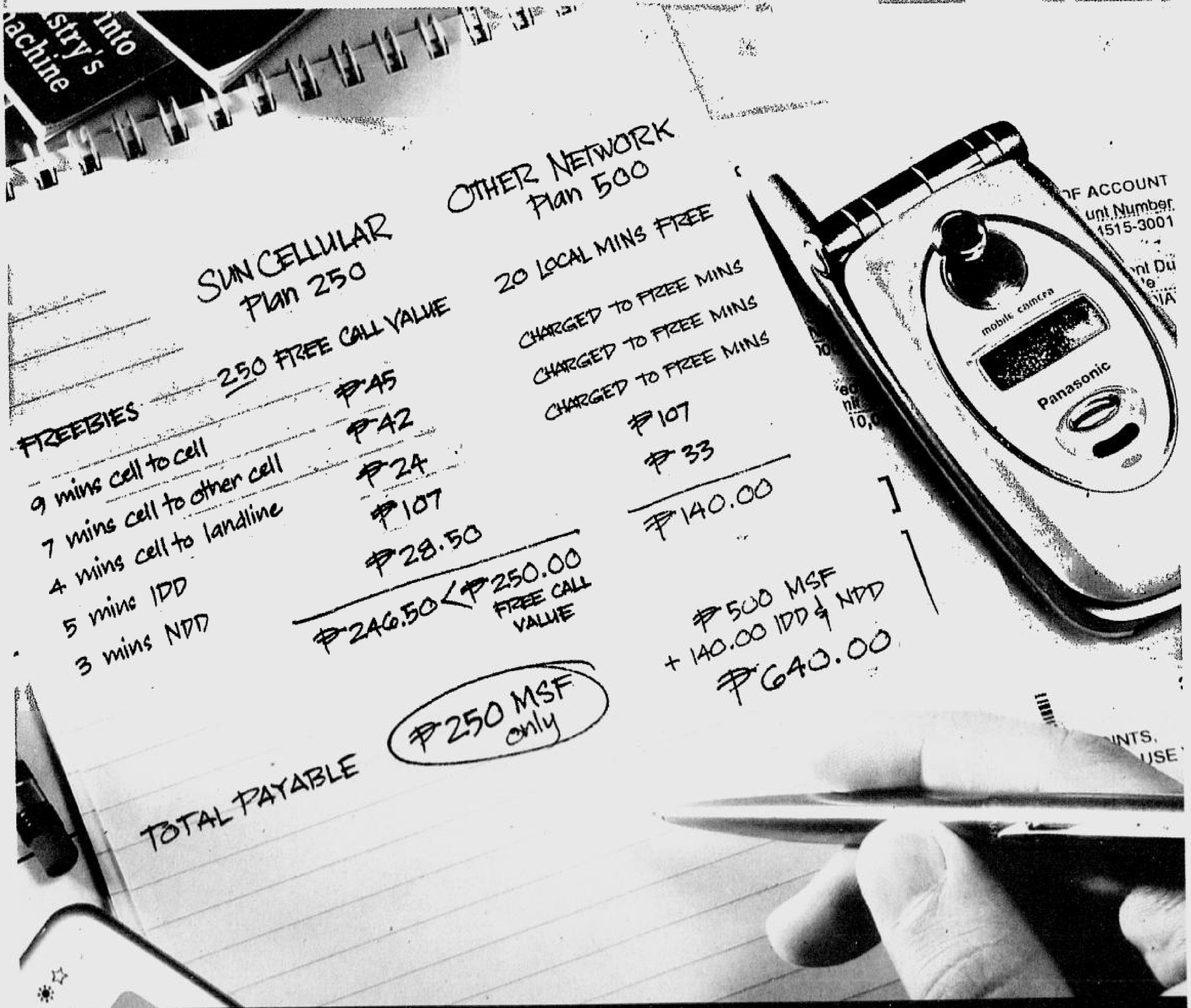

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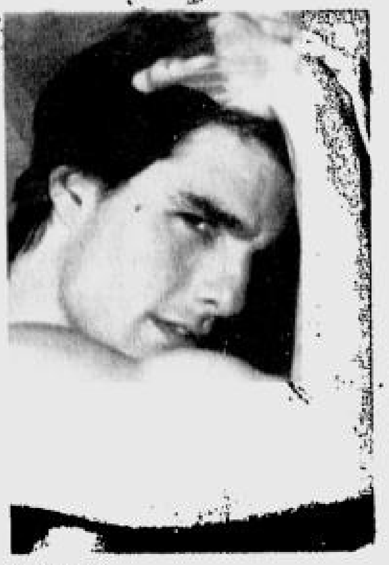
Dina loses chance to star with Tom Cruise



CRUISE

BONNEVIE

By Leah Salterio

DINA Bonnevie lost the chance to star with Tom Cruise in "Ghost Soldiers," which was originally meant to be filmed partly in the Philippines.

The cast and production crew of the American movie cited scrapped plans to film in the country reportedly because of safety concerns. They went to Thailand instead and signed up a Thai actress for the part that could have been Dina's.

Dina was offered the role after a Miramax casting director scanned the Internet for Asian actresses to pick one who could be cast with Tom Cruise.

But far from crying over what could have been, Dina said the role apparently was not meant for her and it is not yet time for her to break into Hollywood.

"Ghost Soldiers," based on the best-selling novel of Hampton Sides, is one of the two war movies that Tom is filming. He also plays the lead in "Fertig," the true-to-life story of Wendel Fertig, an American soldier who declared himself a general and joined the guerilla movement in Mindanao during World War II.

"Ghost Soldiers" is about the survivors of World War II's Bataan Death March, who languished in a Japanese prison camp until Allied Forces rescued them after three years.

Dina said she dreams of the day when Filipino actors finally penetrate Hollywood and Filipino films get into the interna-

DINA/C3

DID YOU KNOW...

Starting this week, **Julius Babao** will join "TV Patrol," the early evening newscast on ABS-CBN, as one of the anchors together with **Korina Sanchez** and **Henry Omaga Diaz.**

However, it is said that Julius will not sit alongside Korina at the same desk—reportedly in accordance with Korina's wish. Korina is said to have insisted that she is the "main anchor" of "TV Patrol" and the most senior among the three of them in the network, so she has to have her solo desk. The news team will therefore put Julius in another studio and Henry in still another one. What Korina wants, Korina gets.

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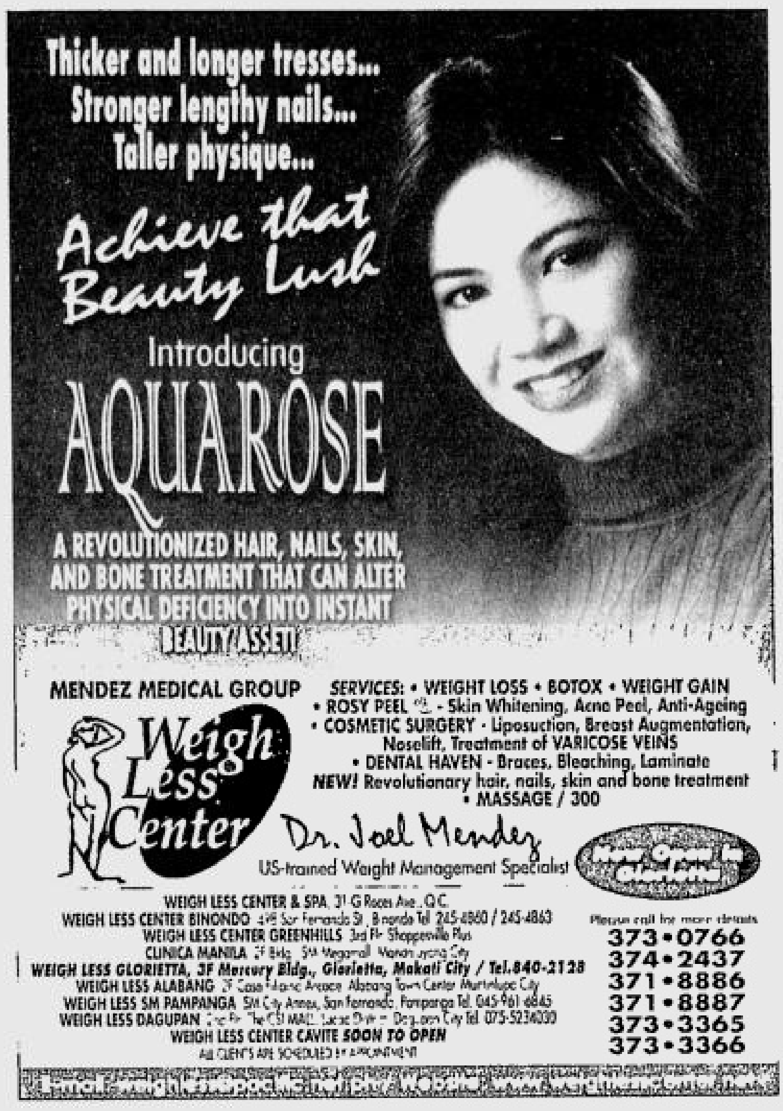

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3 A MAN APART
4 WHAT A GIRL WANTS

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2 PUNLA
3 A MAN APART
4 BOLDSTAR

SM CITY DAVAO
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1 EQUILIBRIUM
2 JUST MARRIED
3 FINAL DESTINATION 2
4 SOLARIS
5 NATIONAL SECURITY
6 JOHNNY ENGLISH

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SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
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2 WILD THORNBERRYS MOVIE
3 KANGAROO JACK
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1 JOHNNY ENGLISH
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2 ANGER MANAGEMENT
11:15 FS/11:45 MF/2:00/4:15/6:30/8.45/10:35 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:50 END

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5 ANGER MANAGEMENT
6 PHONE BOOTH
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6 WHAT A GIRL WANTS
7 A MAN APART

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2 A MAN APART
3 JOHNY ENGLISH
4 EQUILIBRIUM
5 WHAT A GIRL WANTS
6 ANGER MANAGEMENT
7 PHONE BOOTH
8 BOLD STAR

Novaliches 935- 3229 - 30
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2 PHONE BOOTH
3 A MAN APART
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5 ANGER MANAGEMENT
6 JUNGLE BOOK 2
7 WHAT A GIRL WANTS
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2 JUST MARRIED
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5 BOLD STAR
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Dina loses chance to star ...

From page C1

tional market.

"Indians have penetrated even the fashion world," she noted. "Latin-Americans (Jennifer Lopez), Spaniards (Penelope Cruz), Mexicans (Salma Hayek) and Chinese (Zhang Ziyi, Jackie Chan, Jet Li, Lucy Liu) have made it to Hollywood. Their mother tongue is not even English, but they've made an entrance into Hollywood.

"Our mother tongue is English and we can't make it in Hollywood," she added. "It makes my heart bleed."

Bonnevie was also one of the stars considered to play the title role in "The Cory Quirino Kidnap Story." The role went to Ara Mina.

Bonnevie has other projects to keep her busy. She will play Evelyn Singson in Golden Lion Films' multimillion-peso biopic, "Chavit: Bloodson of Ilocos," to be directed by Carlo J. Caparas.

She stars with young actor Cogie Domingo in Regal Entertainment's Mother's Day offering, "Anghel sa Lupa," directed by Jose Javier Reyes.

She is also wrapping up "Moral," directed by Marilou Diaz-Abaya who also created the original "Moral" in the '80s.

Aka Fellas returns to Merk's

AFTER their successful performance last April 14, Aka Fellas returns to Merks at 9 tonight. The group brings their "pop-capella" performance with the members' unique vocal stylings and range, from soprano to bass. Their repertoire includes classical and contemporary pop, as well as R&B and dance music. Members are Ralph Joseph, Ikey Canoy, Red Sandico, Reuben Uy, Karl Villuga, Paolo Navarra, Jin de la Cruz and Mike Salomon. Merk's Bar and Bistro is at the 3rd Level of Greenbelt 3 in Ayala Center, Makati City. For ticket and reservations, call 757-4720.

Aegis Band at Arkdia

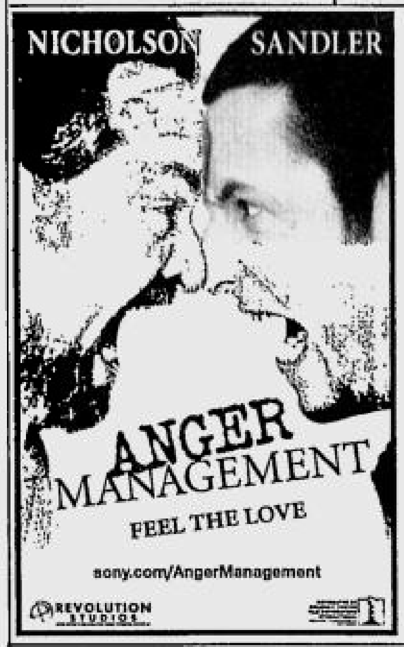
THE AEGIS band will perform at Arkdia on April 30, 9 p.m.

Aegis is composed of vocalists Juliet Sunot and Mercy Sunot, bassist Lotlot Lawan, lead guitarist Rey Abeneja, keyboardist Stella Galindo and drummer Vila Goloviogo.

The band's two albums—"Halik" and "Mahal na Mahal Kita"—have yielded hits like "Basang-Basa sa Ulan," "Luha," "Maniwala Ka," "Sundot Palad" and many more favorites.

Featured band is Surreal.

Tickets are available at the gate. For reservations, call 400-9974.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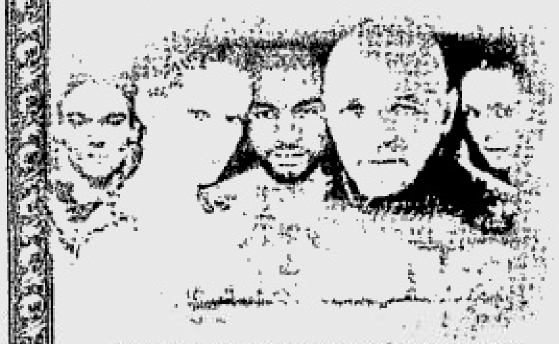

"The single most visually dazzling movie of the last half-decade."
– Kevin Thomas, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Love, revenge and power form a deadly struggle in this fierce Roman drama by Shakespeare.

TITUS

ANTHONY HOPKINS & JESSICA LANGE
Harry J. Lennix, Alan Cumming, Laura Fraser

In this epic tale of revenge based upon the play of William Shakespeare, Anthony Hopkins stars as Titus Andronicus, the Roman general who sows the seeds of vengeance when he executes the son of the enemy Queen, played by Jessica Lange. The repercussions of his action are revealed when the vindictive woman becomes the new wife of the Roman Emperor.

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R-18)

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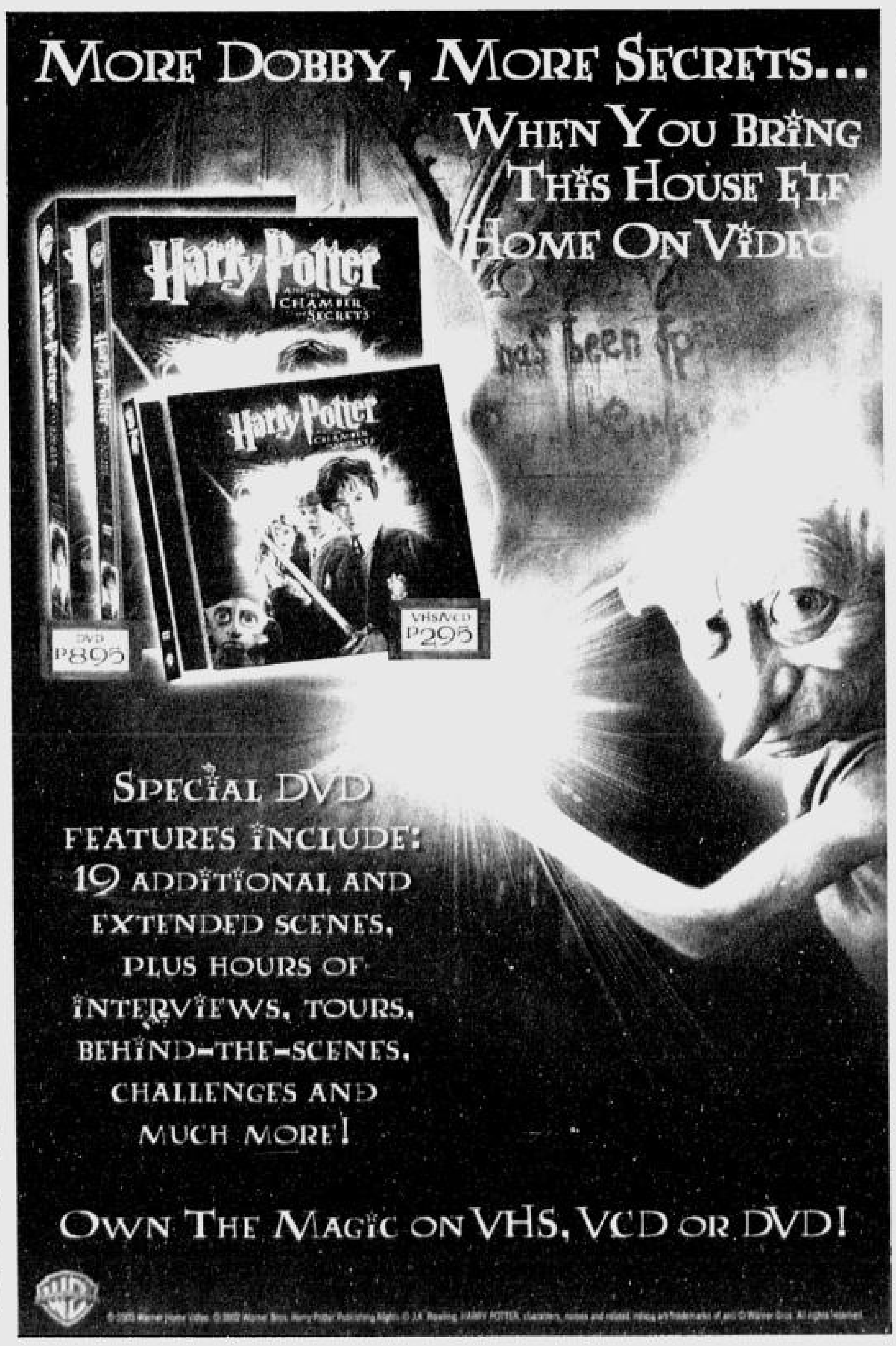
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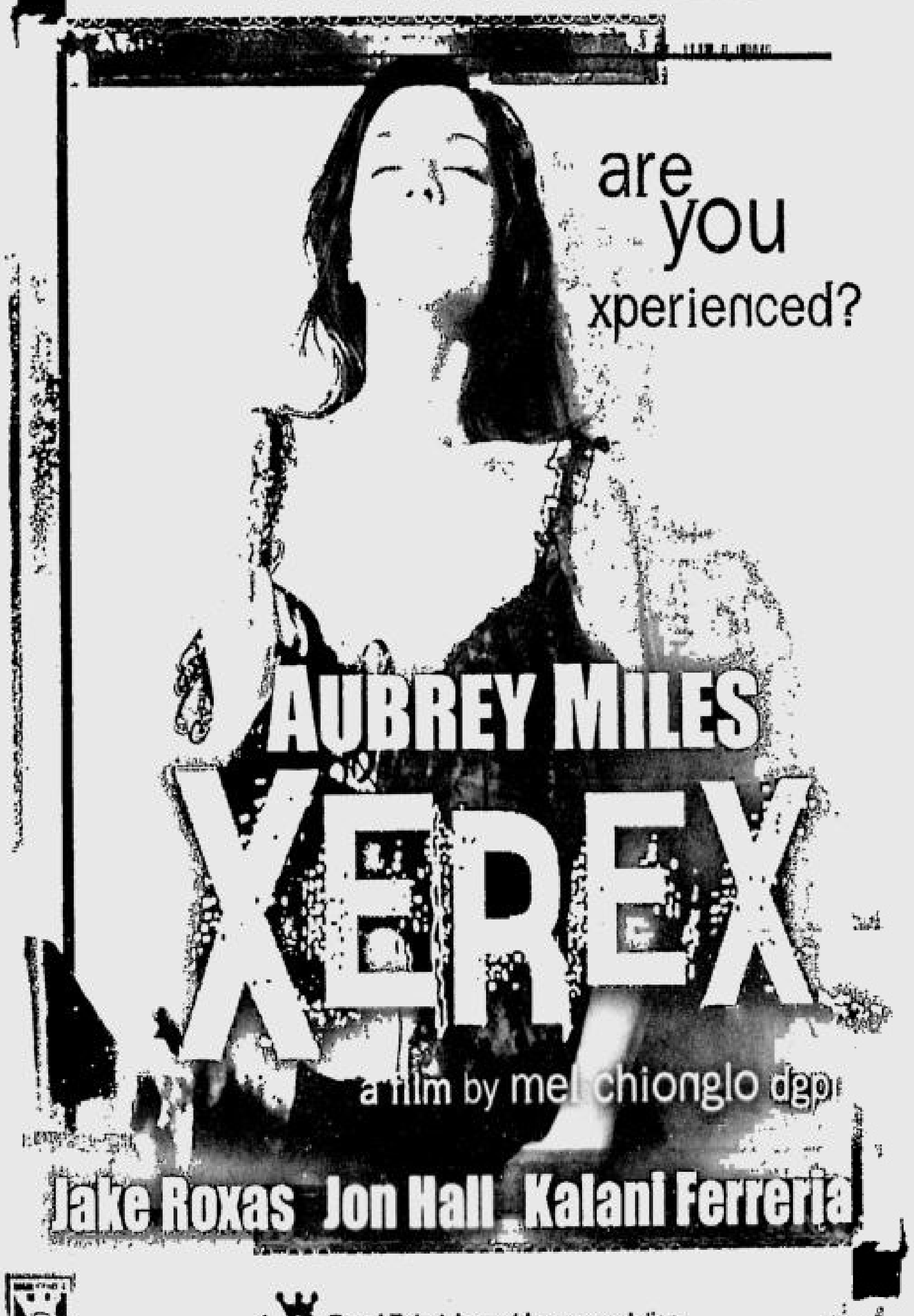
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Ali 1	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
Ali 2	A MAN APART
Ali 3	ANGER MANAGEMENT
Ali 4	JOHNNY ENGLISH
Ali 5	PHONE BOOTH
Ali 6	JUNGLE BOOK 2
Ali 7	EQUILIBRIUM
FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers 1	A MAN APART
Farmers 2	BOLD STAR
ARANETA COLISEUM	
APR 28 & 30	NCA 7 COCK DERBY
MAY 4	PBA GAMES
MAY 9 & 10	MARTIN & REGINE CONCERT

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AMAZING ELEPHANT SHOW ! - 5PM
ELEPHANT RIDE - 6PM

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MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	BALAT SIBUYAS / TRI-SEVENTEEN
ODEON	BOLDSTAR
ODEON-2	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL/ BATAS ANG UUSIG
ROBEN	PUNLA
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	HARRY POTTER 'THEY
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	PUNLA
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	PUNLA
REMAR	BOLDSTAR
REMAR-2	PUNLA
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A	PUNLA
B	BOLD STAR
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
CINEMA-2	THE JUNGLE BOOK 2
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	KASIPING
CINEMA-2	BOLDSTAR
CINEMA-3	PUNLA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PHONE BOOTH
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	KANGAROO JACK
CINEMA-6	SEX DRIVE
CINEMA-7	THE CORE
CINEMA-8	KAULAYAW
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	WHAT A GIRL WANTS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ANGER MANAGEMENT
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	JOHNNY ENGLISH
CINEMA-12	A MAN APART
CINEMA-14	EQUILIBRIUM
CINEMA-15	JUNGLE BOOK 2
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LANES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

DID YOU KNOW...

Kris Aquino reportedly bought a house in Alabang located in a subdivision near BF Homes Parañaque, where Joey Marquez, Kris' rumored on and off boyfriend lives. Marquez is the mayor of Parañaque.

MIKEY'S DAY

Pampanga Vice Gov. Mikey Macapagal-Arroyo, better known as presidential son, blows out the 34 candles on his birthday cake on Saturday(below). He spent the day with his constituents attending Mass, distributing land titles and fruit-bearing trees, awarding livelihood programs and breaking ground for the Sta. Fe-San Rafael Bridge in Guagua. With him were his wife, Angela, his mother the President, Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, Gov. Lito Lapid and provincial mayors.

SHOW STOPPERS

Chin up

TIME
2003
Asian Heroes

THE COVER story of the latest Time Magazine salutes its 2003 list of "Asian Heroes: They Made a Difference As They Made Us Proud." The lone Philippine honoree and gracing the cover of Time Asia is film-and-television actress Chin-Chin Gutierrez.

This year's list of Time's Asian Heroes features inspirational figures such as the health-care workers fighting the SARS virus. It also includes artist-entertainers such as conceptual artist Yoko Ono, NBA star Yao Ming and the internationally renowned cellist Yo Yo Ma. These celebrities were chosen not just for their artistic excellence but for their activism in pursuing the well-being of the greater world outside their professional circles.

Time cites Chin-Chin for "using her fame to spread a message often ignored in the Philippines: there are natural resources aside from beauty and talent..." The article quotes Chin-Chin saying, "The environment needs our help to preserve its future... There's a proverb: The earth is not given to you by your parents. It is loaned to you by your children."

Asked for her personal reaction on making the cover of Time, Chin-Chin said, "It's a great honor, of course. And beyond feelings of personal accomplishment, I take it as an affirmation that caring for the natural world is important. It is quite apt because in saving the environment for our children, time is of the essence." Then she quipped, "Wow, I'm in the same issue as Yao Ming!"

Chin-Chin Gutierrez is a multi-awarded actress who plays the archvillain Helga Lamermoor in the hugely popular telenovela "Hanggang Kapiling Ka."

Why 'Anger Management' clicks with viewers

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

AFTER a lean season caused in part by the war in Iraq, the US box office has bounced back, with "Anger Management," starring **Adam Sandler** and **Jack Nicolson**, leading last week's pack, grossing a whopping $44.5 M on its opening weekend. That makes it the best opener of 2003, beating even "Daredevil's" already impressive $40.3 M (last February).

The spectacular showing of "Anger Management" has astounded Hollywood and challenged analysts to figure out why it has clicked so much with viewers.

Could it be the story? The film is about a generally placid guy (Sandler) who is accused of throwing a temper tantrum during a plane flight, and is ordered to get counseling and therapy from an anger management guru (Nicholson).

The twist is that Nicholson himself is a hothead. He moves into Sandler's apartment to help his patient release his repressed rage, but the anger released is mostly the therapist's own!

Did the twist tickle viewers' funnybones? Or, could the movie's strongest selling factor have been the fact that its material is what the stressful times need—not just comedy, but laughs about stress itself?

A third possibility is its star value. Both Sandler and Nicholson are popular stars, and can separately topbill hit films. Hollywood observers note that Nicholson and **Harrison Ford** are the only stars to have $100M grossers in each of four consecutive decades of stardom. And Sandler has topbilled four movies grossing at least $100M each.

Put these two hitmakers together, and you get "Anger Management's" truly impressive opening-weekend gross. If the film remains popular, it could be one of the few movies this year to gross $200 M, or better.

But more than just stellar addition could be at work here. "Anger Management" doesn't just have two superstars, but Sandler and Nicholson appeal to different age groups of viewers.

Sandler is popular with teens and young adults, while Nicholson appeals to mature moviegoers. Put them together in one film, and you get two audiences instead of one, thus accounting for its huge grosses.

Also relevant is the fact that, through these two stars, the movies regales viewers with a generational conflict, in which young or mature viewers can take sides. And, when the two combatants finally come to terms with each other, the movie's two sets of viewers can similarly experience empathetic resolution.

Add to this the fact that "Anger Management" is the two star's first collaboration, so the film enjoys the extra appeal of the new team-up.

Over and above all of these factors is the continuing strength of the "buddy movie" format, of which "Anger Management" is only the latest example. Viewers just love seeing mismatched and even combative people getting on each other's nerves—before they realize that they're buddies, after all.

All of which proves anew that, in the film trade, familiarity doesn't breed contempt, but reassures. And that, the more things change in the world of cinema, the more they remain the same.

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PHONE BOOTH **R13** 12:35, 2:30, 4:25, 6:20, 8:15,10:10	**SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE** **R18** 12:00,2:00,4:00, 6:00,8:00,10:00	**JOHNNY ENGLISH** **P13** 12:10, 2:10, 4:10, 6:10, 8:10, 10:10

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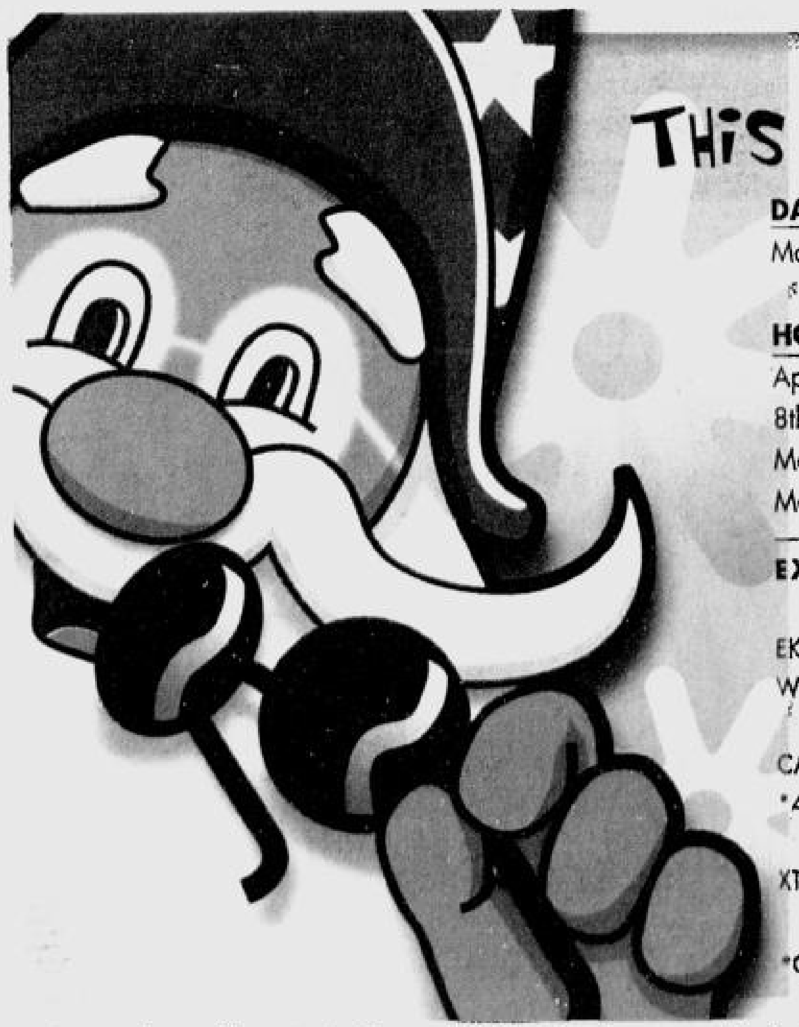

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May 1, Labor Day	Thursday	10am-10pm
May 17 & 24	Saturday	**CLOSED** for a private function

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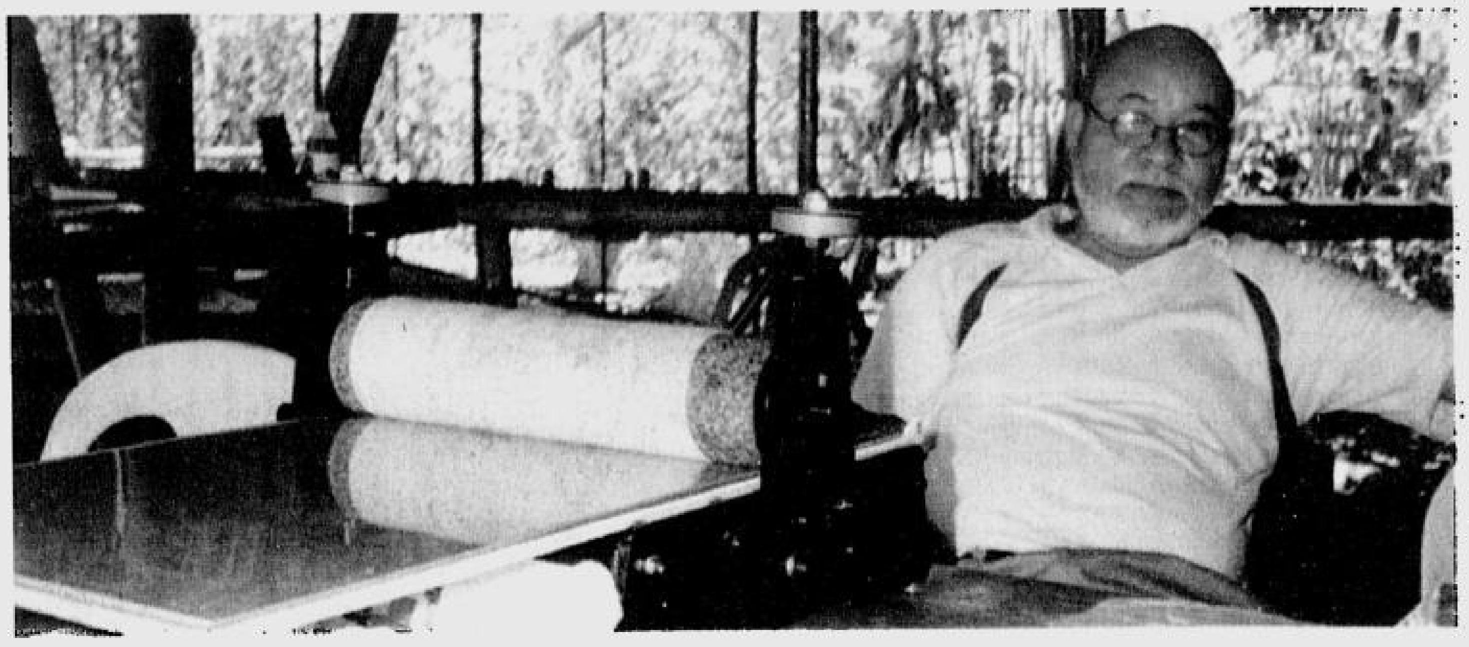

RAUL Isidro and his printing machine

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

WHEN Raul Isidro first discovered the process that goes into the making of monoprints a few years back, little did he know that he would be permanently hooked on the medium.

Isidro was, after all, more identified with the painting arts, having a reputation as a true-blue abstractionist of nearly four decades.

But the lure of monoprint ultimately proved difficult to resist. It was a most demanding medium which, Isidro soon found out, combined both painting and printmaking.

More important, the medium offered a wide room for experimentation and innovation, which have nurtured Isidro's restless soul.

Exactly two years and two successful solo shows later, Isidro's romance with monoprints takes a new auspicious turn, as his latest collection bears (West Gallery, SM Megamall, until May 13).

The artist's passion has unceasingly steered him to embark on a soul-searching journey even as he continues to mine the medium that must abide by the unequivocal rule: Thou shall not repeat nor reproduce the image.

While his previous work delved into things ecological (his "Mother Earth" series at the Luz), the new pieces boldly take on a more philosophical, if not anthropological, bent.

All this, of course, must be viewed within the context of the all-encompassing belief about the grandeur and glory of God's creation.

The artist seems to revel in the full potential of printmaking, which has of late emerged as a respectable mode of artistic endeavor, certainly at par with painting and sculpture, thanks to the efforts of printmaking aficionados such as Isidro himself, Fil de la Cruz, Pandy Aviado, Benjie Cabrera and other stalwarts of the Philippine Association of Printmakers (PAP).

Grand touches

With his penchant for grand gestural touches, the unbridled, spontaneous sensibility that permeates his world, Isidro fortifies the gains acquired from his previous experimentations with acid-free, high-grade recycled paper.

The shapes looming large in his works are

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Lovely manifestations of the irrational

By Constantino C. Tejero

CONCEPTUAL art considers the idea behind an artwork as more important than the artwork itself. In fact, the concept itself is the art.

This can be traced back to Marcel Duchamp, but it became a movement and started to become popular only in the 1960s.

In the country, it was pioneered by Roberto Chabet, the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts professor who has herded many a young Filipino avant-garde, such as the group Surrounded by Water.

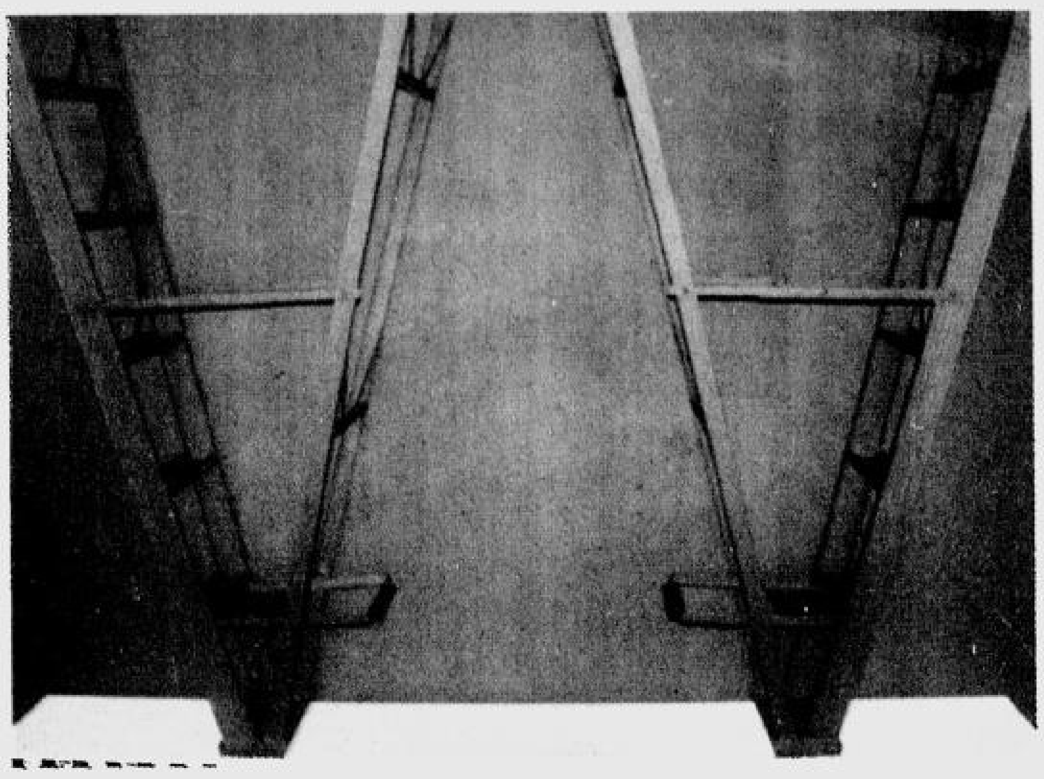
Through the years, Chabet's avant-gardism hasn't dimmed, as can be gleaned from his recent exhibit, "Two Paintings: Bungled, Symptomatic and Chance Actions," shown simultaneously in West Gallery and Finale Art Gallery at Artwalk, 4/L SM Megamall A.

Despite the exhibit's title, one shouldn't expect to see some paintings in both venues, and there really was none. Instead, there were shelves and furniture, tools and blackboards, bric-à-brac, a canoe—all black.

The boards are of ½"-thick plywood (the one used for flooring and walling), while the shelves are of ¾"-thick plywood. Most of the objects have been stripped of their original functions, and everything has been sprayed with black acrylic, except for the multicolor alphabet blocks and the shelves which have been left unvarnished. The objects, with their clean lines and a dull sheen, look elegant when set off the white walls.

In West Gallery is a blackboard lined halfway with four shelves held by 12 metal brackets. Hung on the edges of the shelves are four clipboards serving as black mirrors.

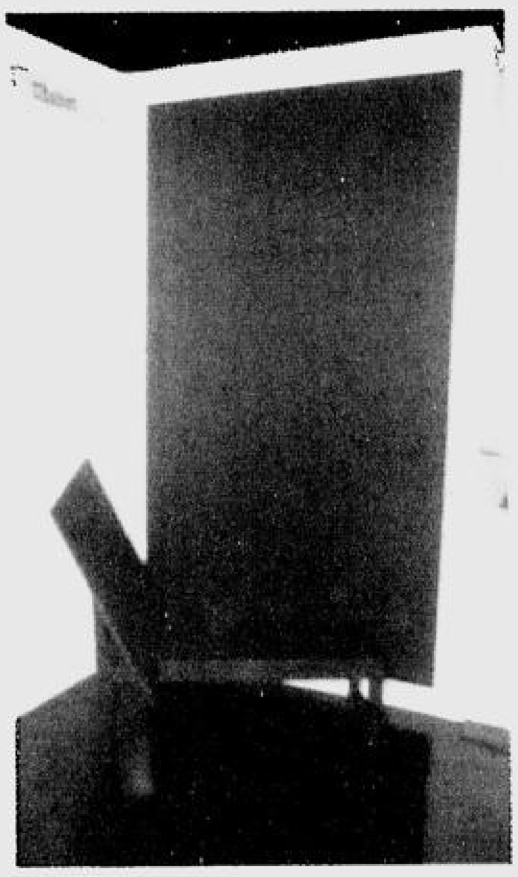
Fixed on the gallery's main wall is a larger blackboard with a shelf at the bottom. The shelf is lined underneath with small alphabet blocks, looking like notches. Perched on it are two upended aluminum ladders, forming two Vs or a W.



Surreal arrangement

Almost concealed in the lower part of a sidewall is an open book, mounted in a box-type unvarnished wooden frame and encased in glass. The gallery's information sheet says it's a Spanish grammar book, but we couldn't tell, as the pages have been sprayed black.

On the front wall, in the show window, is another blackboard with a shelf partitioned by a metal L ruler, making it look like a support for a dresser mirror.



In Finale, there's a low divan (actually a painter's horse) fixed with an easel at one end. Its side is set against a big backboard while what constitutes its headboard leans toward the white wall.

Then there's the inverted dugout with its upper tip resting on a blackboard, its curving contour set against a larger blackboard, and its lower tip perched on a plywood box with three steps.

This surreal arrangement produces an image of a black crescent moon, or a black rainbow reaching from the ground to the sky. At another angle, however, it could be a dolphin or a seal upraised on a platform.

The centerpiece in the gallery is a blackboard with nine shelves rowed with 75 alarm clocks of molded plastic and metal of fanciful shapes—round, oval, rectangle, square, house, folding board, flower, radio, handbag, smiling cow, cherub with basket of yarn balls, Victorian house façade with Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse, mosque, butterfly, kettle, drummer boy, beribboned bag, Mother and Child with cherub and star, T-shirt—all sprayed with black acrylic so that the clock faces cannot be seen.

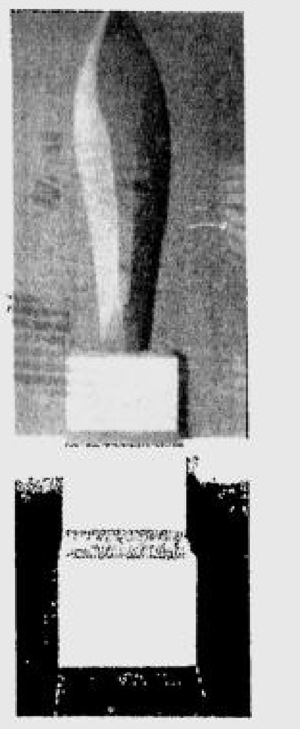
Experience of art

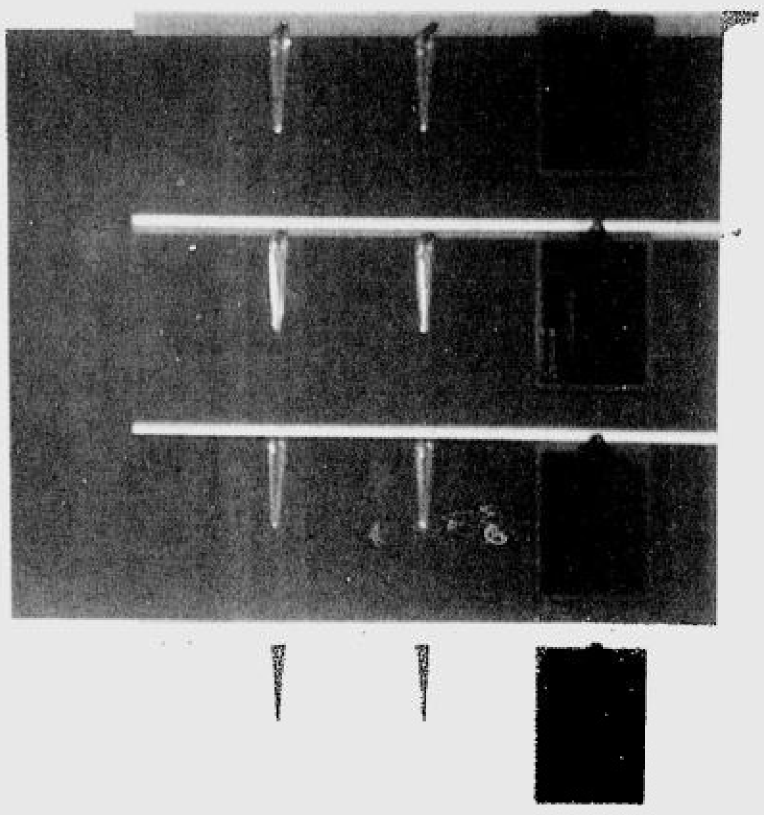
The info sheet says the exhibit's title derives from what Freud called "the lapse of memory, the slips of the tongue, and the little absent-minded, seemingly illogical act that beset our normal day-to-day routine."

Instead of scratching your head off as to the mysterious placements and arrangements of these banal objects, you are well advised to just take them as manifestations of the irrational in everyday life. The concept, as one can see, gives more charm if not depth to the artworks.

Adds the info sheet: "Chabet's work suggests that, as in everyday life, these psychic circuits occur in the experience of art, when rational understanding falters, meaning slips, and the unexpected—the magical—slips in."

Chabet was the first curator of the Cultural Center of the Philippines Museum. Now 66, he continues to produce art that's as provocative as many a young avant-garde's, and certainly more accomplished, with more polish, insight and wit.





AT KITCHEN AND MAGNET

Tan does Cotan

By Jack Sotto
Contributor

SOMETIME in the 1970s, artist Lee Aguinaldo, then in the prime of the period of his hard-edged linear paintings, alluded to a little-known 17th-century Spanish artist in his work.

Half the panel of one painting, "Conversation Between Magritte and Fray Juan Sanchez Cotan," was dominated by a gaping black rectangular area that resembled an open door.

Fray Juan Sanchez Cotan was a Carthusian lay brother whose still lifes were among the earliest in Europe. According to the Oxford Companion to Western Art, his still lifes "all depict vegetables, fruits, and sometimes dead birds, arranged a plain black niche representing a *cantarero* (a simple larder)."

His most famous painting is probably "Still Life with Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber," which is in the collection of Museum of Art in San Diego, California.

What makes it distinct and unusual from the more lavish trompe d'oeil Netherlandish paintings of that era is its seemingly modern minimalism. The quince and the cabbage are suspended on strings, while the sliced melon and cucumber rest on the parapet.

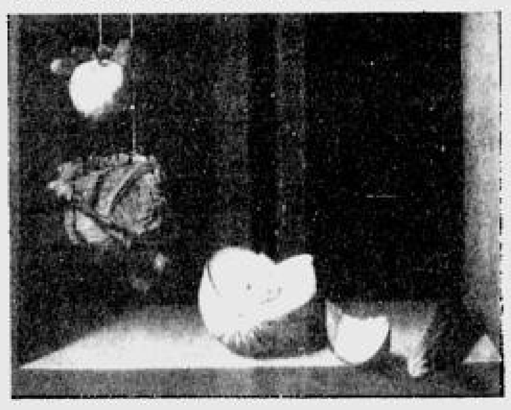
They have been rendered hyperrealistically and arranged with an almost mathematical precision.

But it is the black background that gives these common objects an other-worldiness, a sacramental meditativeness. The painting is strikingly spare and elegant—a *bodegon* styled by, say, John Pawson.

If Aguinaldo imagined a discourse between Cotan and the Belgian surrealist as filtered through his own style and sensibility, conceptual artist Gerard Tan muses on his near namesake with a two-venue exhibit titled "Fast-food Cotan."

Tan himself discovered Cotan through Aguinaldo. He remembers being fascinated by a monograph on Cotan in Aguinaldo's library.

TAN'S steel-and-tile bussing window—a witty comment on the fast-paced consumerist reality of contemporary urban life



FRAY Juan Sanchez Cotan's "Still Life with Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber," circa 1600, oil on canvas

In Tan's case, his *canterero* is the bussing window of Kitchen, a cafeteria-style restaurant along the SM Megastrip. While dining there one night, the artist found himself sitting across the dark and rectangular window, a repository for all the dirty dishes that were brought back to the kitchen for emptying and washing. In a way, the harried waiters were Tan's unwitting collaborators.

Tan set up a camera in front of the bussing window and snapped some 150 digital photos of the activity at short intervals over a period of one night. He printed them as tiny 2" x 3" photos in a continuous strip.

They are in color although it's almost difficult to tell since the trays and dishes are practically monochromatic, broken only by an occasional glimpse of a red Coke can.

Two-venue exhibit

The first venue is Kitchen itself. Tan positions the filmstrip along the wall of the bussing window and across the window itself.

The viewer is forced to look at the actual window and then peer closely at the filmstrip, which cinematically recreates Tan's contemporary riff on a classic genre, only this time it's an "unstill life."

Cotan's carefully chosen and laid out foodstuffs have become Tan's unarranged objects haphazardly placed on trays in the hollow of the steel-and-tile bussing window, a witty comment on the hectic, fast-paced consumerist reality and cycle of contemporary urban life.

Tan amplifies his installation in the second venue, the more spacious Magnet Gallery in the ABS-CBN Loop. Here the filmstrip is much longer, running across one corner of the gallery and continuing onto the other side.

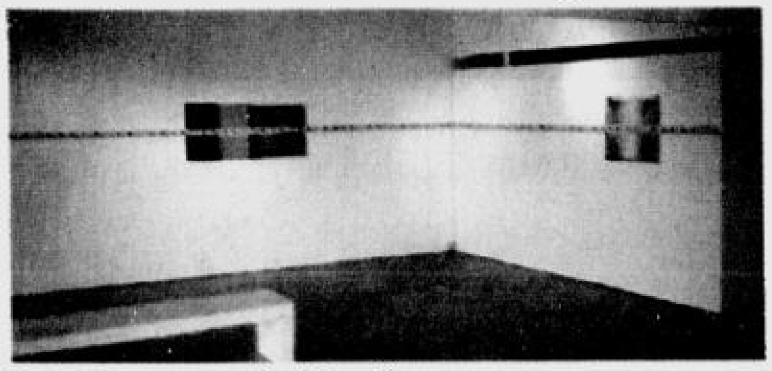
To refer to the actual bussing window in Kitchen, Tan reproduced actual sized photos. He also represents it abstractly as an aluminum rectangle reminiscent of a closed bussing window.

These visual echoes are positioned throughout the gallery, punctuating the rush of the images and linking them to the actual bussing window.

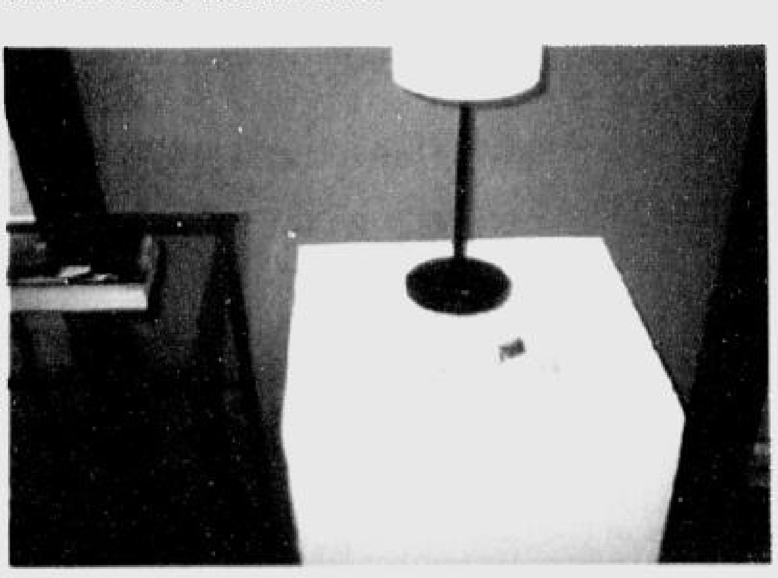
In an art world where the norm is still pretty much traditional genres, Tan challenges the nature and meaning of art, reinterpreting classic ideas in his own idiosyncratic way by utilizing non-traditional mediums.

The Spanish fray is indeed his co-Tan, representing objects on a surface against a dark backdrop, but separated by several centuries and cultures.

The exhibit will run until May 5.



GERARDO Tan's "Fast-food Cotan"



TAN reinterprets classic ideas by utilizing non-traditional mediums.

R.M de Leon reinvents Raphael

WHEN does an adaptation become something new, something original?

R.M. de Leon brings out graphic yet painterly works in a series inspired by a large, archaic book depicting the masterpieces of the great Florentine artist, Raphael. The artist begins by cropping and magnifying certain parts of a work before projecting these images onto paper.

This is where the similarity ends because added to these timeless and poignant figures are splashes of color and a dash of fantasy, displaying the artist's childlike imagination.

The result of the acrylic recipe is the show "Academic," a meeting of the old and new worlds. The show runs until April 30 at the Galleria Duemila, 4/F SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong.

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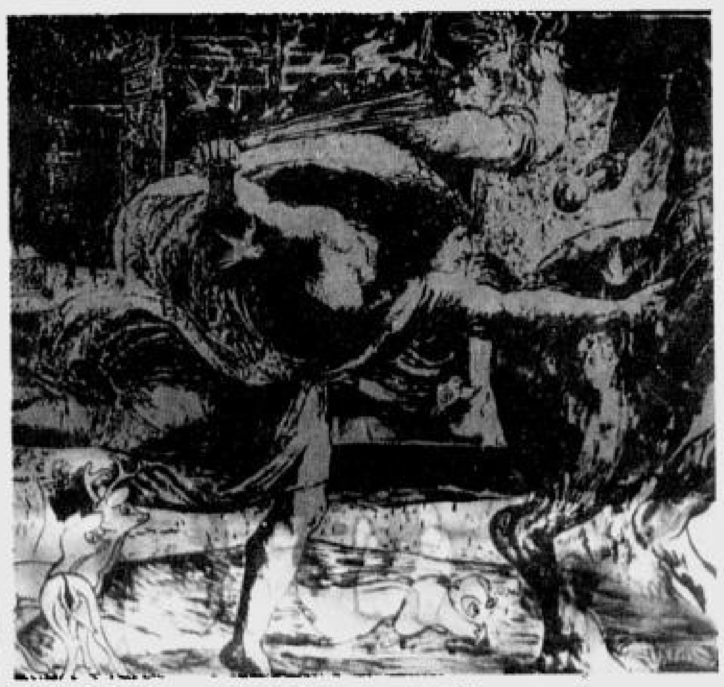
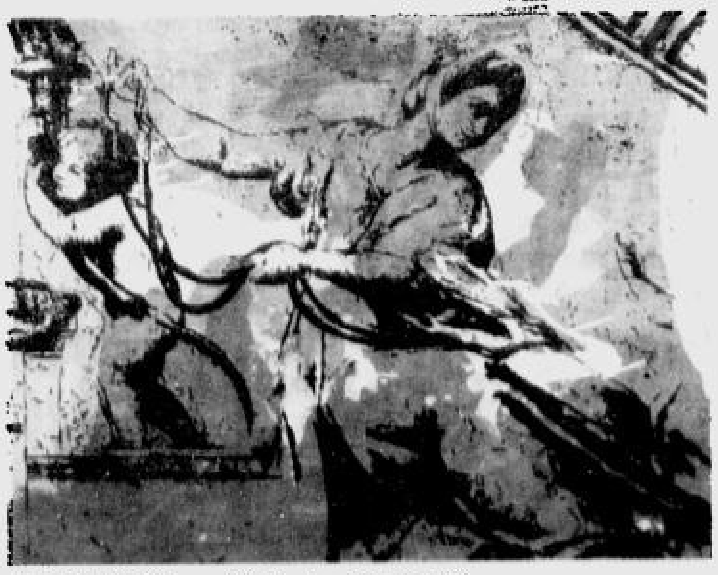


"ACADEMIC (From My Raphael Series 3)"



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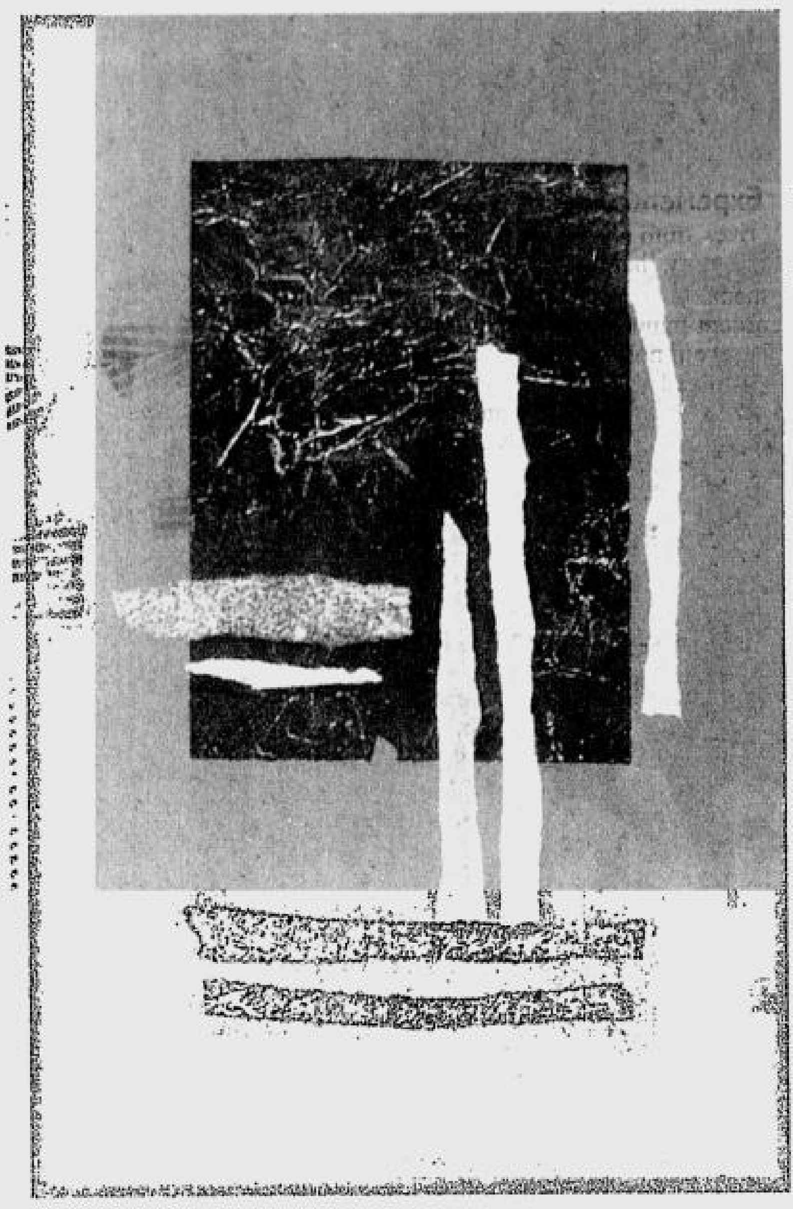
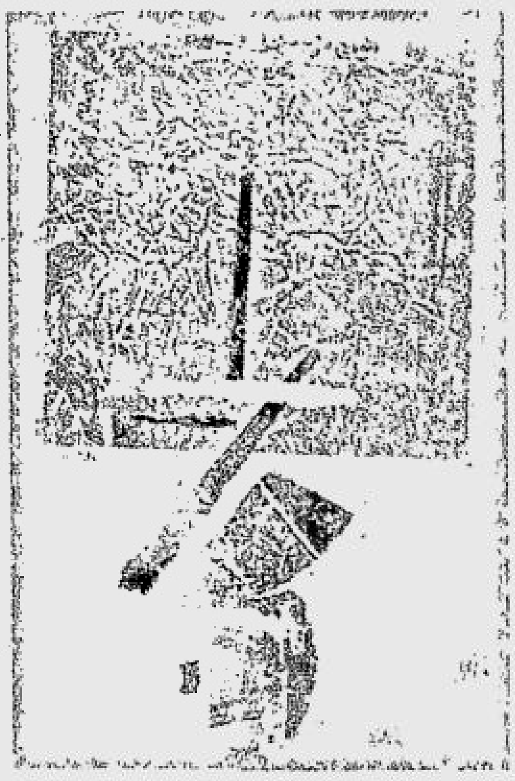


"BLUE Sail"

The artist revels in the exciting possibilities of print



"CIVILIZATION"

The lasting imprint of monoprints

From page D1

decidedly more loose and dynamic in a sense, resembling pieces of slabs or tablets, alluding perhaps to the beginnings of civilization.

Or are they perhaps graphic reminders of the rebirth of humanity? The central form is invariably that of an entire square, which bears multiple gashes from within, not to mention the rich textural qualities they exude. Below it are smaller forms of fragments or slabs, this time more elongated and resembling strips of wood or torn scrolls that echo the leitmotif of the composition.

Calligraphic touches are likewise kept to a minimum, with textural impact playing a decidedly more important role, unlike in previous shows where Isidro literally went to town with flamboyant shapes, still an integral part of his iconography.

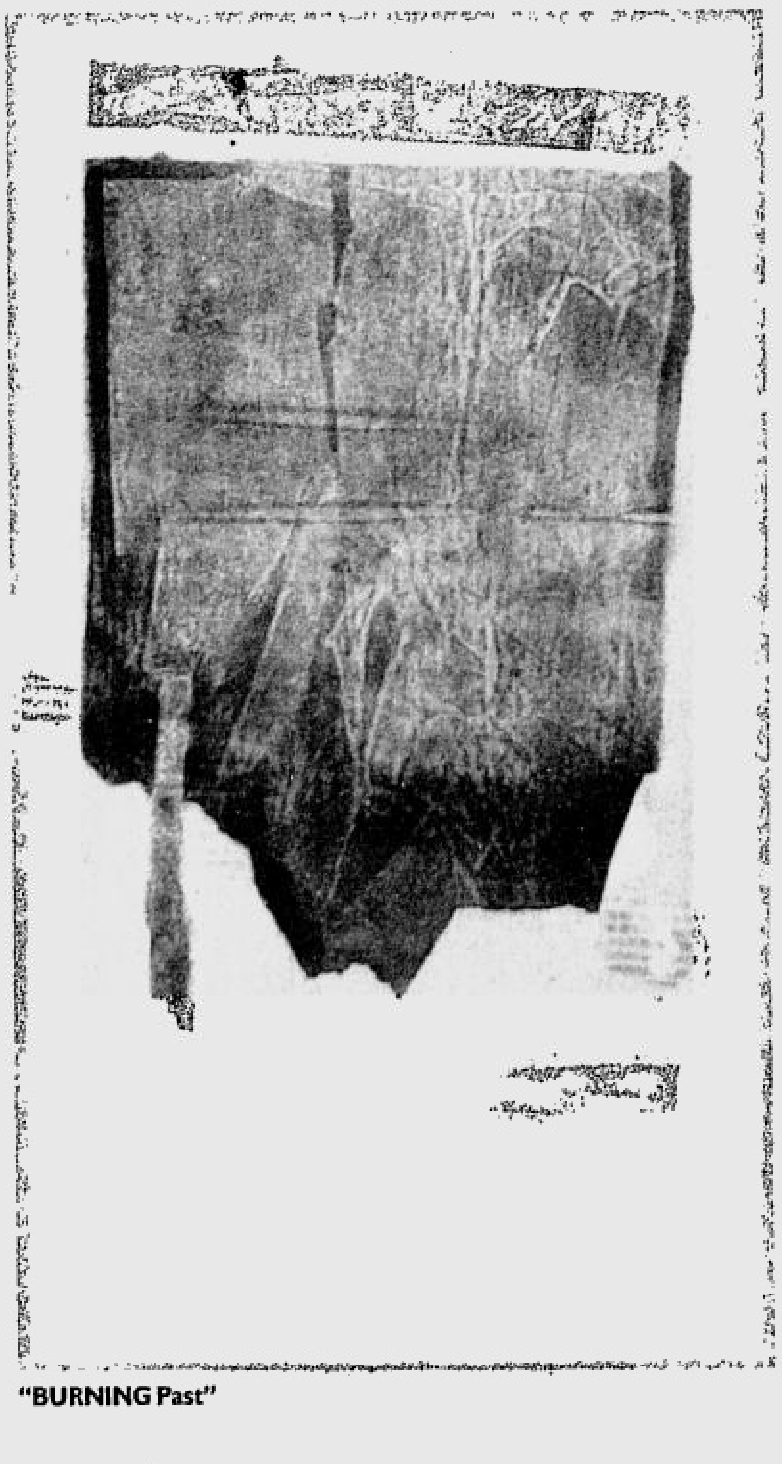
The use of color, too, is more restrained, perhaps unusually austere by the artist's own standards, as if age has mellowed his penchant for bold hues.

With a delicately austere palette, limned in cool pastel shades, the background presents a largely monochromatic presence—grays, blues and beiges—that contrasts with the color of the slabs.

Isidro, who is at the helm of the 35-year-old PAP, has advocated the primacy of printmaking in the arts' totem pole, deserving of public patronage. He has promoted the use of found and recycled media and influenced artists to take up challenging modes with printmaking.

In this show of monoprints, the artist has made his point simply by tapping the rich resources of the fine print, both in the demands of the technique and the endearing charm of his imagery.

E-mail the author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com



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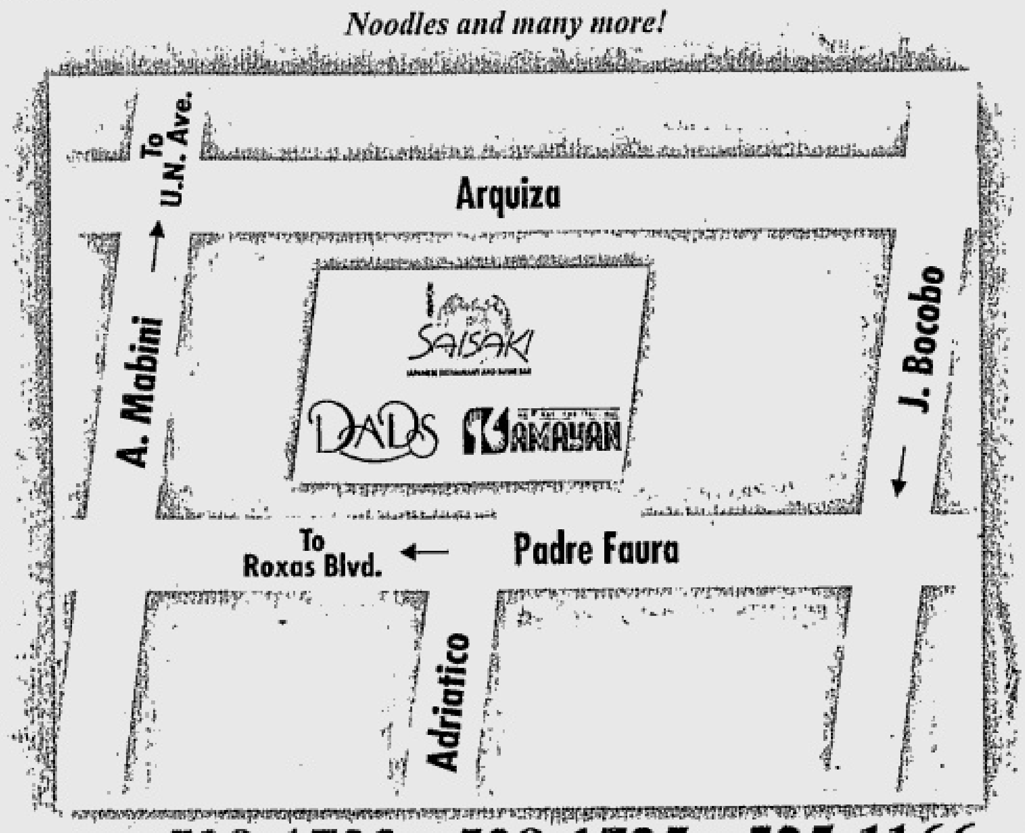
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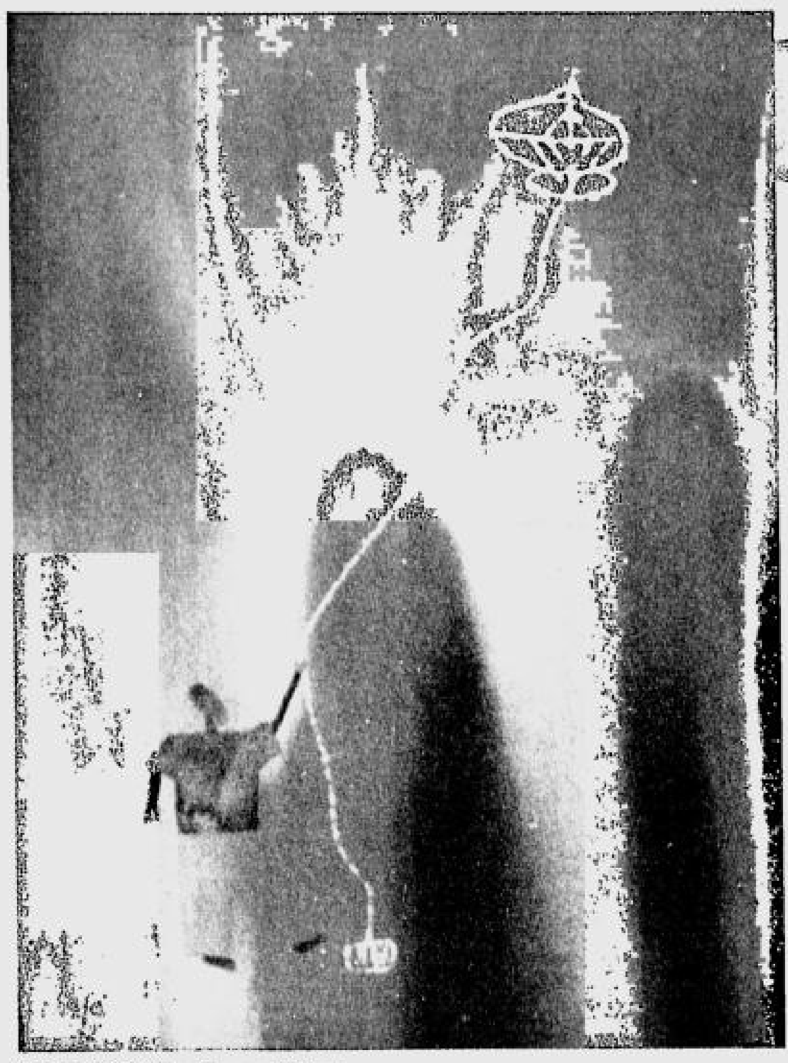

"GURYON" by Yveese Belen

The child at play is the adult at work

By Oscar V. Campomanes
Contributor

"ART," the world-famous Colombian artist Fernando Botero once pithily defined, "is deformation." By this he meant that art serves not to destroy the forms of the Real but to rearrange or remodel them, making us see the Real afresh and renewed in ways often too beautiful or unsettling to describe, even name.

We know Botero for the figurative painting that is the source of his special distinction, drawn through a heady mix of strategic quotations from Renaissance, Baroque and Latin American-colonial painting traditions, and populated, for example, by women of ultra-Wagnerian proportions or similarly corpulent folk from all strata of Colombian society, either satirized or celebrated.

I mention Botero and his unforgettably compelling figurations of form and volume because he keys us to the complex work accomplished by "April's Full," a joint exhibit of the latest creations by the prize-winning young artists Romeo Forbes and Yveese Belen. This show, which is their second together, runs until May 3 at Gallery Nine in Megamall (tel. 687-7302). It is sponsored in part by The Artery.

The points for orientation to the oeuvre and vision of these two young artists are the signa-

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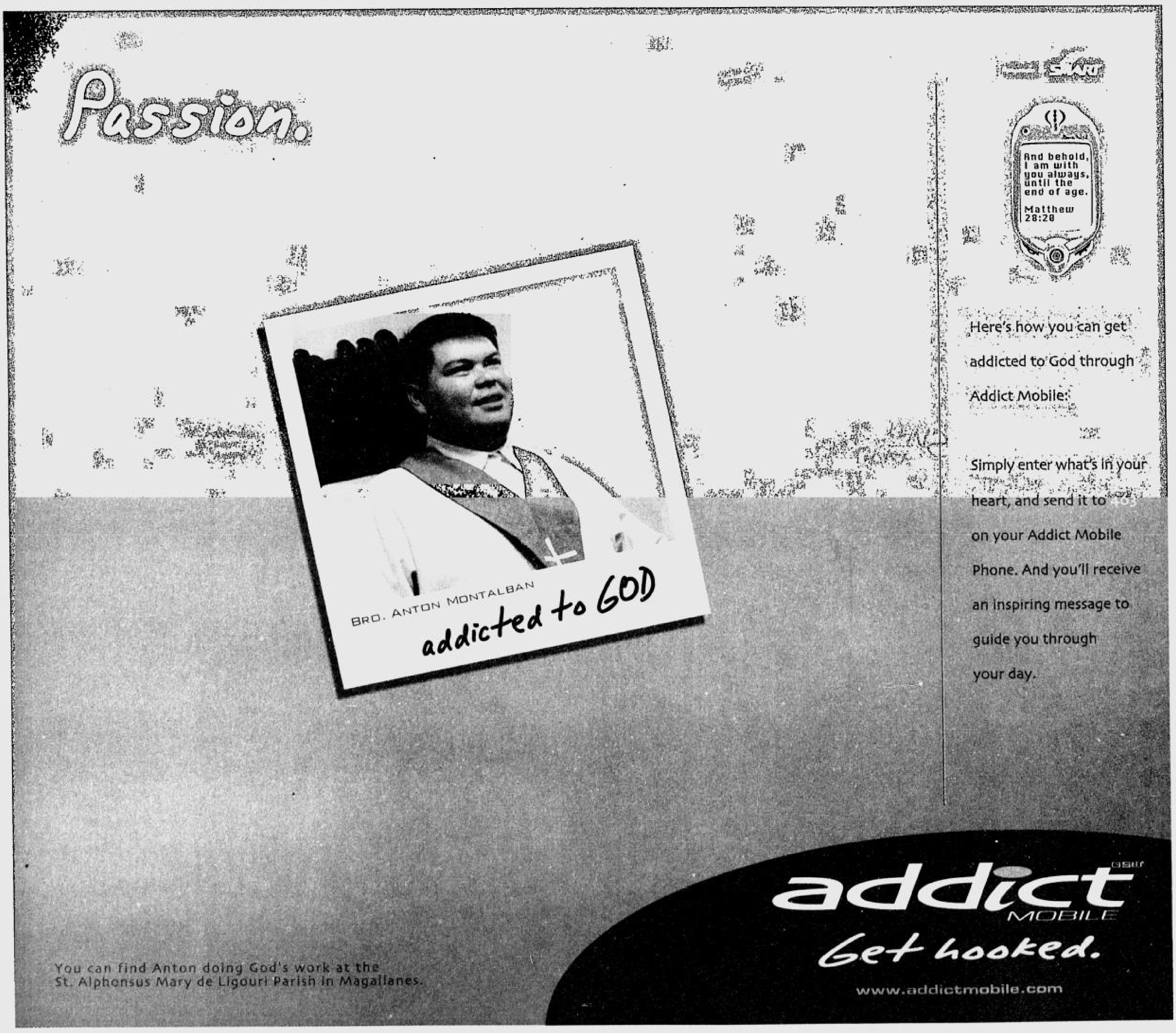

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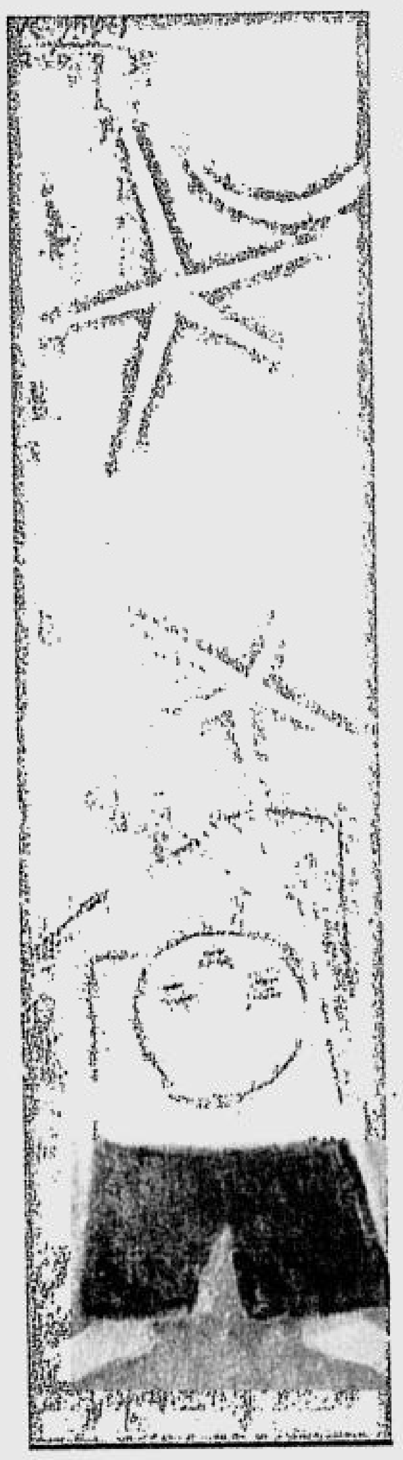
The child at play is the adult. . .

The signature figures of Romeo Forbes and Yveese Belen in a joint exhibit show the phantasy and the real



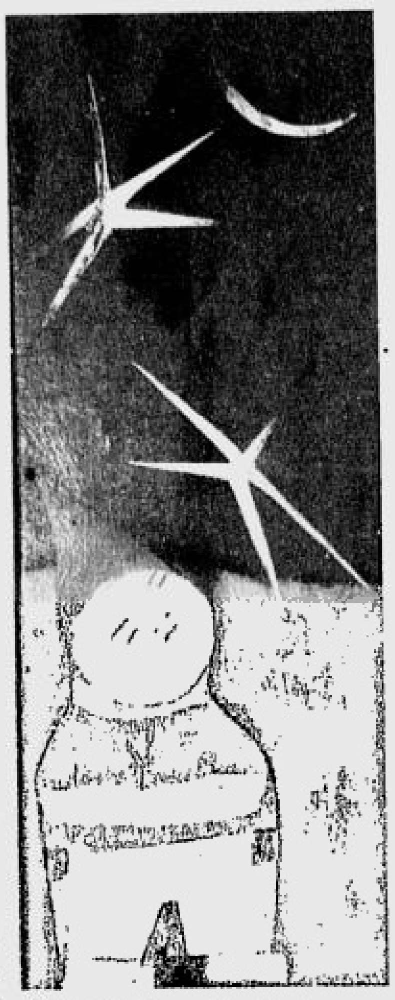
"BINGWIT" by Romeo Forbes

From page E1

ture figures that recur in their work: for Belen, the seemingly inanimate "stick" figures which she renders in full or diluted black (she playfully describes them, in one interview, as "nognog"); and for Forbes, his now familiar unidimensional but consummately geometric figures with their oddly angled and consistently moonish faces and heads.

Forbes's figures, from the panel paintings to the "musical" series, remind one of Botero's, but without the fabled multidimensionality and ambition for immensity of the latter's. While they possess both capacious volume and ample girth, Forbes' figures display the contrasting passion of the painter, for the planar and the diminutive: which is to mark both as a measure of the unfulfilled and to ironize the ideal of unachievable corpulence. Where Botero's figures are rounded, Forbes's figures tend to be squat, inspite of the pull toward the lunar that otherwise relieves their resulting formal severities.

Belen's figures—whether at play (as in the "Paglalaro" series), or in struggle and at ready against the elements in "April Shower," or the temptations of love or danger in "Sa Duyan ni Mahal" and "Bisikleta sa Burol"—signify the universal too even as she subtly dons them in culturally specific and distinctively indigenous habiliments, here obviously imagined from the familiar in Obando, her native locale. That is why their particularity (age, gender, etc.) becomes simultaneously immaterial and significant to the all-too-human wishes, energies, and movements that inform her colorful portrayals of the universal expressions of desire and their concomitant incarnations in bodily countenance, and the immediate and familiar contexts of local culture framing all her material for this exhibit.

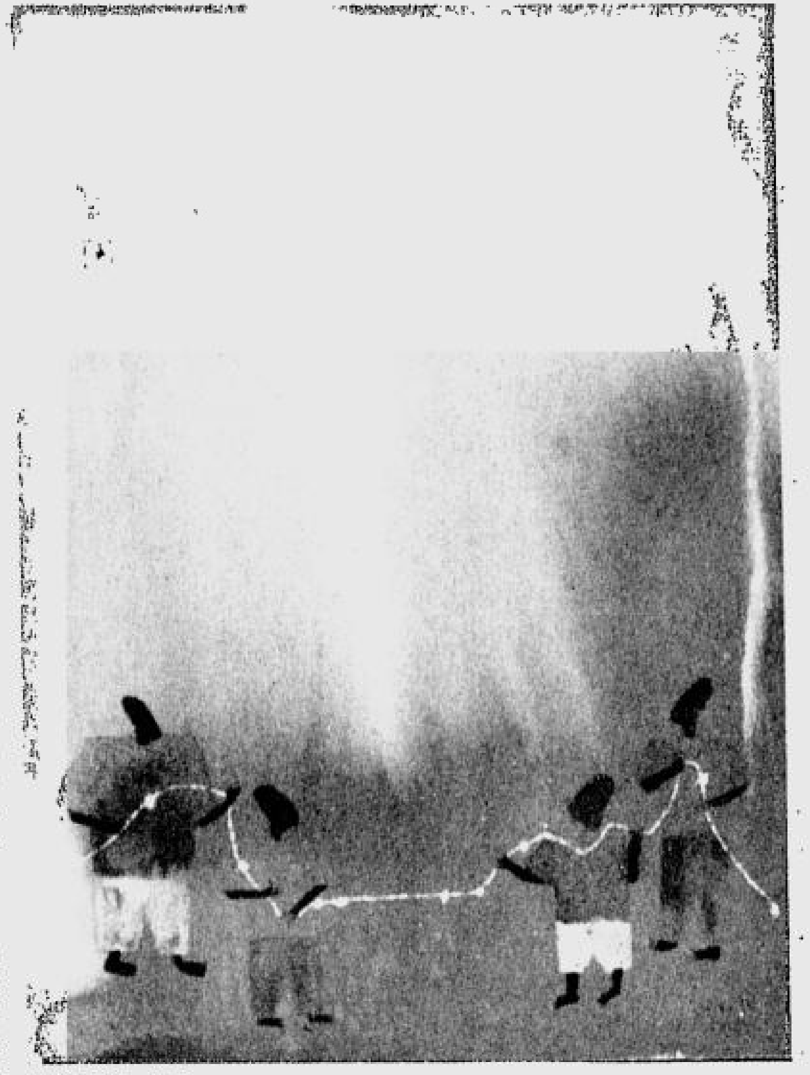


"WISH ko lang..." by Forbes

Forbes needs little introduction, after his feat of placing first in the 2001 Petron Art Contest (among a bevy of awards) and having had a string of highly successful exhibits—joint or group—within the last two years, the most recent being "Duet in Dreams" (November 2002) with the equally precocious Anton Balao. For an artist now just at the threshold of his youth and productivity, he already commands a loyal cadre of collectors and boosters who watch out for his latest with vigilance, and who religiously hover around his exhibits to snatch, quickly, the recent additions to their stash of his artwork.

Discovery

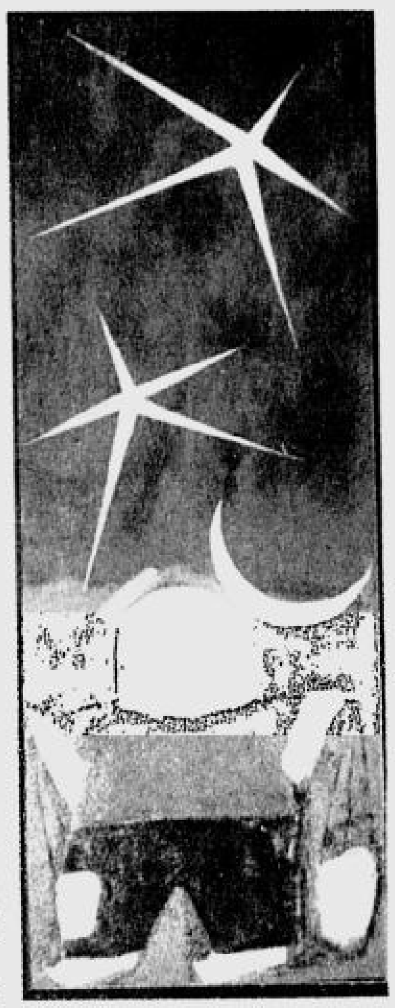
It is Belen who emerges as a discovery and surprise (even as she is beginning to establish a resumé in her own right and she shared the grand prize with Forbes in an art contest last year). If Forbes led me to Botero and back to his stylistic uniqueness, it was Belen who pushed me to read for the thematic threads in these two different and yet comparable sets of work by way of Sigmund Freud, and back to Belen herself and Forbes.



"HILA" by Belen

To understand Belen's works, it is helpful to consider critic-teacher Nonon Carandang's critical and creative sociology of *paglalaro* as a popular and compulsive activity in Philippine life. In "*Kakaibang Pagtingin sa Hilagyo ng mga Larong Pinoy sa Teoryang Fantasy*," he shows the significant expenditure, the amount of energy and "emotion" that Filipinos devote to what might otherwise be libidinally characterized as unproductive and wasteful activities, even dangerous to the fragile fabrics of communal equipoise and order—and, yes, morality—held together only by the repressive levers of the Real and the social. Only in this context perhaps can we better appreciate Freud's related comment that "the motive forces of phantasies are unsatisfied wishes and every single phantasy is the fulfillment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality."

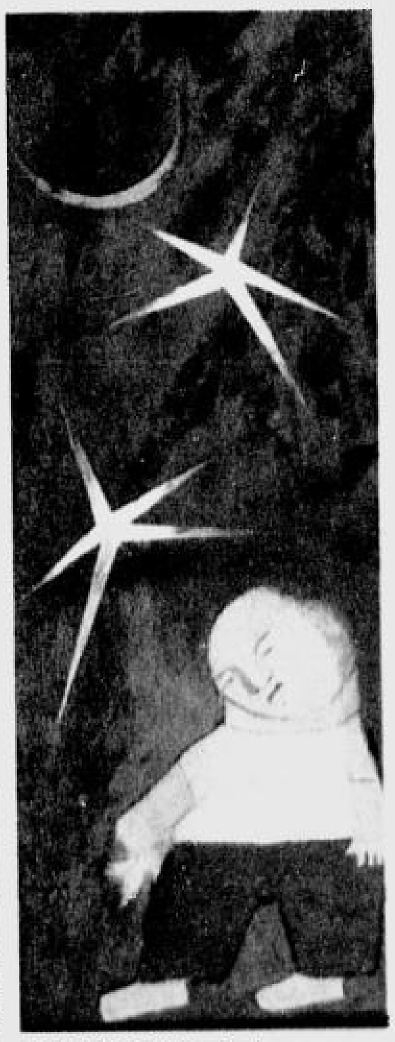
Carandang's helpful insights made me pay keen and friendly attention, in particular, to the thematic of child's play and children's games in Belen's "Tumbang Preso," "Patintero," "Piko," "Guryon" "Skip, Hop," "Hila," and "Limbo Rock," etc. and to Belen's pursuit of their reverberative significations. Indeed, Carandang's beautiful Filipino-Tagalog word for his subject, "hilagyo," meaning simultaneously *kulay* (color) and *mukha* (face/aspect) seemed tantalizingly focal for my own effort here at critical interpretation.



"TUBIG" by Forbes

When Belen first observed for me, in an interview, that *itim* (black) is a color less or least used to evoke the expressive/exuberant in both human and Filipino character, given our stereotypical associations with it of precisely the opposite, and that she was therefore reversing and recharging it in her delineations of her *nognog* figures as too (universal human) in the phantasmal spaces of child's play, I failed to appreciate the extreme liberality that she was taking with the conventional or established; At best, I read her gesture and act of artistic license as ironic.

Still more was I puzzled when I first looked at the completions of her critical vision in these watercolors. For the energy, the kinetic flux, the heat and sweat, the active strategizing that play and games induce in their participants, I could only apprehend little more than inanimate stick figures, more frozen in their presumably assertive acts of life than acting out the drama of phantasy in their forms of "play," their performances.



"HAPUNAN" by Forbes

Oxymoron

But Belen's strangely oxomoronic renditions of Filipino child's play and children's games as working analogies of "adult" and universal wish-fulfillment ratify in full and contrastive pictography what Sigmund Freud designates as "the work of phantasy": to provide a space for transgression and human expression in the face of social strictures and to deform the real so as to contour it to the cut of our unfulfilled wishes. Belen's generous dollops of earthen and elemental hues as expressive and animated backgrounds to her otherwise unmoving figures—dollops of hue often evenly spread, or qualified with glows of white and indigo here or there—make of the human drama of phantasy a visual splendor of considerable power.

Forbes's works amply thematize the ultimately irrepressible impulse for human creation, expression, and aspiration exemplified in Belen's elegant delineations of child's play and games. Whether they "play" in or tend the garden or fish for fruit and the stars in "Bingwit," "Natatangi" and the panel painting "Harvest," Forbes's figures are ostensibly oriented and moved, if they are not footed in equally enigmatic poses, by overriding wish, obsessive desire, and exuberant expressiveness.

Forbes's figures are here again paired with his already established icons of personal ecriture: the stars (occasionally, the moon). But I now read stars and moon in these works as standing both for unfulfilled wish or aspiration and for the indomitability of human character. Rather than a matter of *mis-en-scene*, stars and moon signify and orient the human desire to express, the human wish to create, the human impulse to reach for the unattainable.

Oscar V. Campomanes teaches in the Department of Literature at De La Salle University-Manila and edits the journal American Studies-Asia.

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"Basta Maggi, Waggi"
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Ready to have a place of your own?

It would be foolish to say anybody would be contented to rent a house forever. Some say that renting is a difficult thing by itself, so who wouldn't want to have a house of his own? However, the desire to own a home more often remains just a dream, what with the high cost of decent housing prevalent in the market nowadays.

To help the average Filipino fulfill his dream of having a decent place to live in, East West Bank came up with a housing loan program that is affordable with easy-on-the-pocket repayment terms. East West Bank has grown by leaps and bounds in terms of acceptance from its target market, primarily due to the type of products and services that the Bank offers. Take for example its Home Suite Loan product, with five loan programs to suit the needs of individual borrowers.

To answer the need to build or buy a house, **EWB Home Suite Loan** offers the **HomeConstruct** that provides families the opportunity to build a home on a previously owned piece of property, or the **HomeAcquire**, a loan program that borrowers can avail of to buy a readily-built townhouse or condominium unit. Families can also avail of HomeAcquire if they want to purchase a house and lot.

The opportunities HomeConstruct and HomeAcquire programs present to the Filipino consumers to move into a house of their choice, are indeed timely. The interest rate environment is relatively consumer-friendly, and the EWB loan programs are presently designed to provide consumers with easy repayment terms.

One such repayment method is the **Customer Protect Financing** program, which comes in 10- and 15-year payment terms. This unique loan repayment scheme protects the borrower against fluctuating interest rates since the monthly amortization is already fixed for the entire term of the loan, thus making it easier for the borrower to budget the amount needed for housing loan repayment.

Ultimately, the benefit to the Filipino family is foremost with East West Bank. The Customer Protect Financing program provides the means to assure that no Filipino family will ever be unduly burdened by the repayment of a housing loan, while the HomeConstruct and HomeAcquire loan programs are readily available to make the Filipino's dream of owning a house, a reality.

For more details, call the Home Suite Loan hotline **421-4296** or **822-2377 (8ACCESS)**, visit the nearest East West Bank Personalized Banking Center or log on to **www.eastwestbanker.com**.

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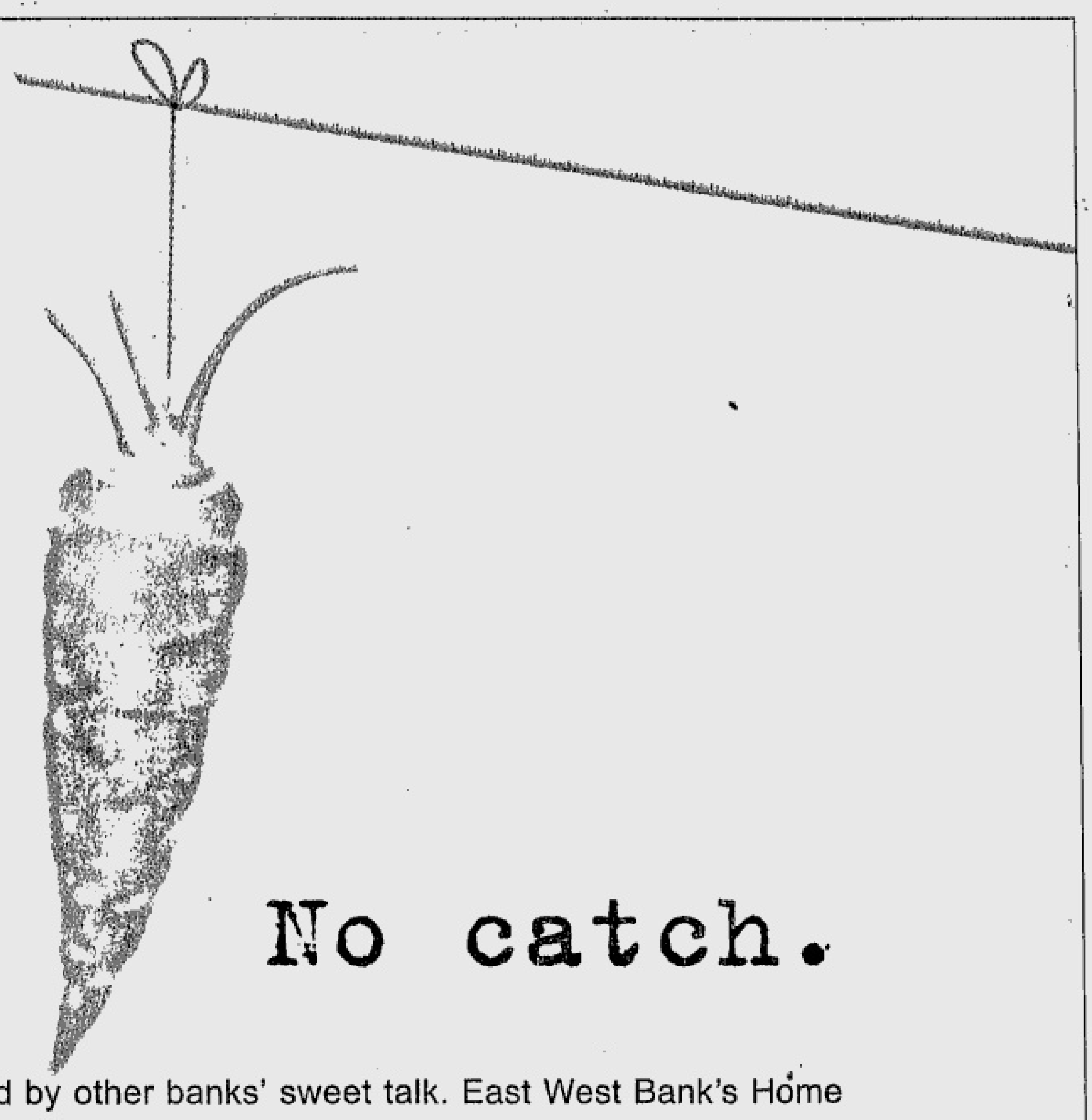

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Don't be lured by other banks' sweet talk. East West Bank's Home Suite Loan gives you the right options to expand, improve, build, or acquire your home, whether for residence, investment, or business.

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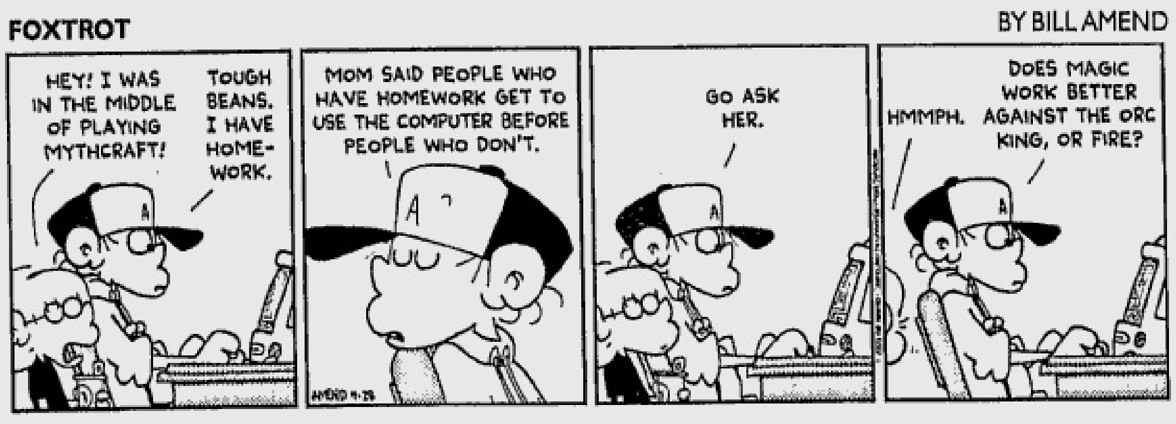
7th B-day na ni Dianne, imbitado ang mga kaibigan at ang mga kaklase niya.
Para masarap ang kainan at palaro ng mga bata...
don't forget, basta monobloc...
First and Foremost
SINCE 1988
COFTA
ORIGINAL
MONOBLOC
Imitated Never Equaled

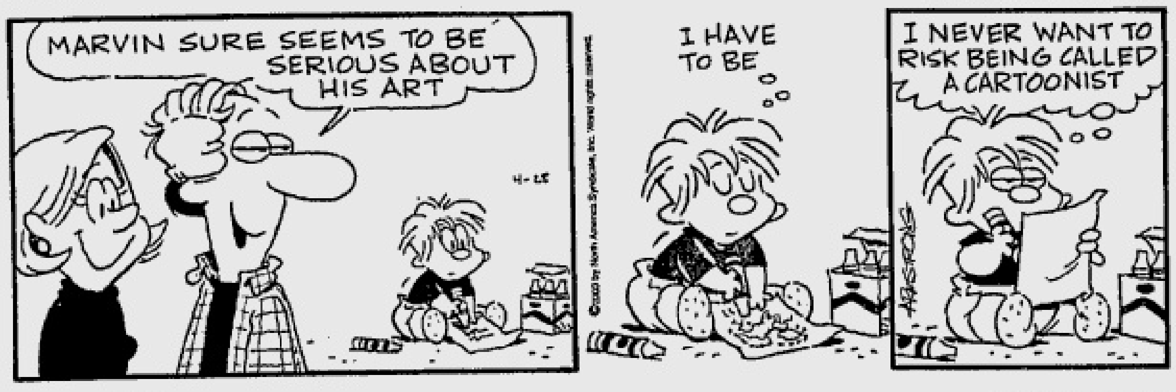
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


HEY! I WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF PLAYING MYTHCRAFT!
TOUGH BEANS. I HAVE HOMEWORK.
MOM SAID PEOPLE WHO HAVE HOMEWORK GET TO USE THE COMPUTER BEFORE PEOPLE WHO DON'T.
GO ASK HER.
HMMPH.
DOES MAGIC WORK BETTER AGAINST THE ORC KING, OR FIRE?
AMEND 4-28

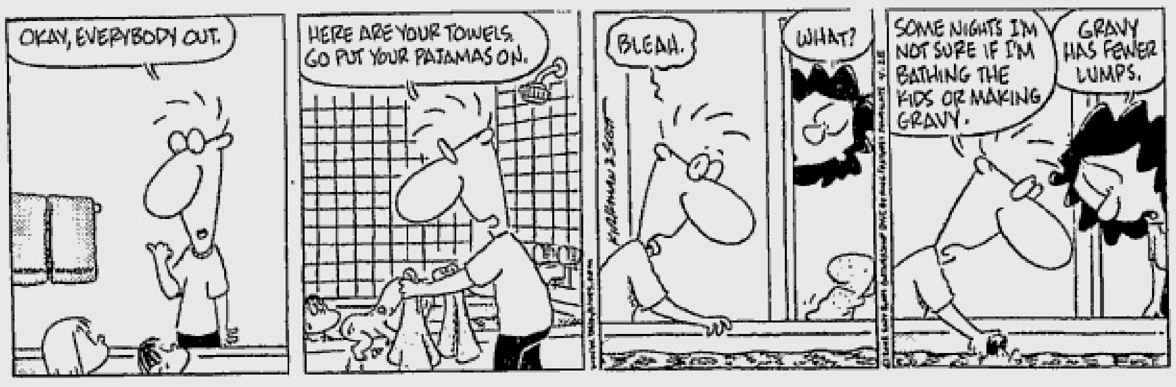
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


MARVIN SURE SEEMS TO BE SERIOUS ABOUT HIS ART
4-28
I HAVE TO BE
I NEVER WANT TO RISK BEING CALLED A CARTOONIST
ARMSTRONG

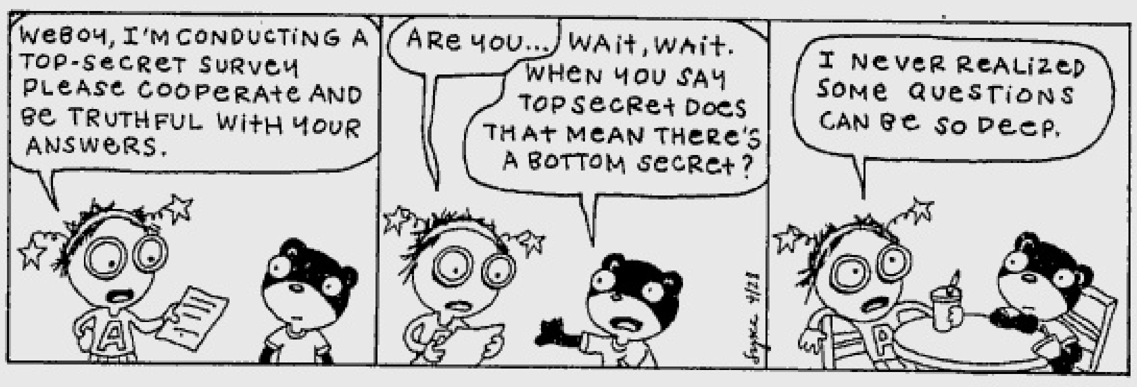
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


OKAY, EVERYBODY OUT.
HERE ARE YOUR TOWELS. GO PUT YOUR PAJAMAS ON.
BLEAH.
WHAT?
SOME NIGHTS I'M NOT SURE IF I'M BATHING THE KIDS OR MAKING GRAVY.
GRAVY HAS FEWER LUMPS.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WEBOY, I'M CONDUCTING A TOP-SECRET SURVEY PLEASE COOPERATE AND BE TRUTHFUL WITH YOUR ANSWERS.
ARE YOU...
WAIT, WAIT. WHEN YOU SAY TOP SECRET DOES THAT MEAN THERE'S A BOTTOM SECRET?
I NEVER REALIZED SOME QUESTIONS CAN BE SO DEEP.
Lyra 4/28

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are reliable, dependable and self-assured. Because you are always aware of the impression you create on others, you are diplomatic, polite and charming. Others have expectations of you because you readily assume positions of responsibility. You present yourself well. Your focus this year is on your closest relationships.
Birthdate of: Daniel Day-Lewis, actor; Dale Earnhardt, car racer; Michelle Pfeiffer, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You often act before you think. Be careful about spending too much money on children or romantic interests today. You're tempted to blow too much money on fun and amusement.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You've got lots of energy to move ahead today to accomplish whatever you want. A mild warning, however, against being too generous or extravagant with family members.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You're definitely in touch with the more spiritual side of yourself today. You see now that what is done to one is done to all. (We are all in this Big Soup together.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Because of feelings of gratitude or affection, you are tempted to be too generous to a friend today. Generosity is a wonderful thing—but don't give away the store.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You handle all dealings with VIPs, authority figures and parents with ease and charm today. You are dignified, proud and powerful; others respect you for this.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You have a strong desire to escape from your daily routine today. You want to do anything different—travel, study or even talking to new and unusual people.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): It's one thing to be generous, and another to be foolish. You're tempted to give too much to a friend or lend someone something that you really don't want to part with. Protect your own interests.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): It's easy to feel warmhearted and openhanded toward others today. You enjoy all social interaction, especially with important people, VIPs and bosses. You can easily impress people now!

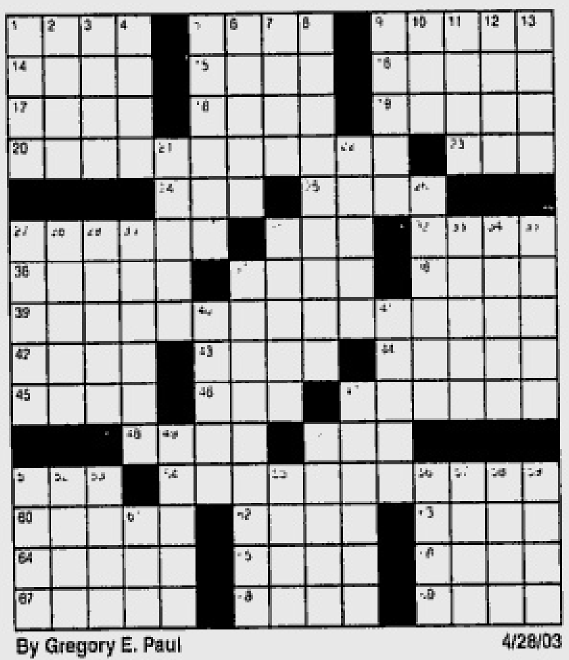
SAGITTARIUS: (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You can get a lot done at work today; however, do not be overconfident when dealing with foreign countries, the media and issues related to higher education. Don't count your chickens before they hatch.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You feel unusually extravagant today. You want to splurge on loved ones with gifts, money and treats. You want everyone to have a good time!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Discussions with partners and parents are warm and friendly today. You feel bighearted and open. Naturally, others respond to this with warmth and friendliness.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You feel optimistic about your plans today. However, always remember: There is nothing more permanent than a temporary building.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Gregory E. Paul
Scottdale, PA

4/28/03

ACROSS
1 Auction offers
5 Weighty block
9 Ringlets
14 Riding the waves
15 Coke or Pepsi
16 From the top
17 "...__ right with the world"
18 United __ Emirates
19 Cotton twill fabric
20 '70s fad
23 Fresh
24 Actor Cariou
25 Fit of pique
27 Intermediaries
31 Learning inst.
32 McGregor of "Emma"
36 Gossip
37 Oven setting
38 Poi source
39 '80s fad
42 Mr. Knievel
43 Shoshones
44 Actress Witherspoon
45 Be gutsy
46 Spanish article
47 Swearwords
48 Punch
50 Tavern
51 Beavers' creation
54 '90s fad
60 Heap of Dickens
62 Snack
63 Utopia
64 Supermarket passageway
65 Southernmost Great Lake
66 Perfect prose
67 SDI weapon
68 Fender flaw
69 Country singer Lovett

DOWN
1 Jezebel's false god
2 Sea-bound land
3 Cold-cut business
4 Give lip to
5 Frightens
6 Sophia of "Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow"
7 __ and alack!
8 Head scarves
9 Desert growth
10 That's nasty!
11 April forecast
12 Merchandise category
13 C.P. or Phoebe
21 Marine starter?
22 Picture in picture
26 Leash
27 Bowshaped
28 Pear-shaped fruit
29 Burning coal
30 Individuals with titles
31 Quips
33 Boat trails
34 Come up
35 Centering points
37 Foreshadowed
40 Arroyo
41 Shanks of legs
47 Seal of approval
49 Different one
50 Washbowl
51 Binary
52 "Norma" melody
53 Wide shot
55 Additional
56 Totter
57 Small whirlpool
58 Singer Diamond
59 Poker pot builder
61 Alternative to lager

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

C	O	S	M	I	C	■	K	A	T	A	R	I	N	A
A	C	C	E	D	E	■	A	B	I	L	E	N	E	S
S	T	O	L	E	N	■	M	E	M	E	N	T	O	S
H	O	P	■	A	T	O	P	■	■	S	T	O	N	E
E	P	E	E	■	I	R	A	N	I	■	S	N	A	G
D	I	S	S	E	M	B	L	E	R	S	■	A	T	A
■	■	■	A	D	E	■	A	W	R	Y	■	T	A	I
A	U	G	U	S	T	S	■	T	E	R	C	E	L	S
I	K	E	■	E	R	I	C	■	V	I	A	■	■	■
R	U	N	■	L	E	G	A	L	E	A	G	L	E	S
F	L	I	P	■	S	H	E	A	R	■	E	U	R	O
R	E	T	I	E	■	■	S	P	E	D	■	P	E	R
A	L	O	E	V	E	R	A	■	N	O	D	I	C	E
M	E	R	C	A	T	O	R	■	C	L	I	N	T	S
E	S	S	E	N	C	E	S	■	E	L	D	E	S	T

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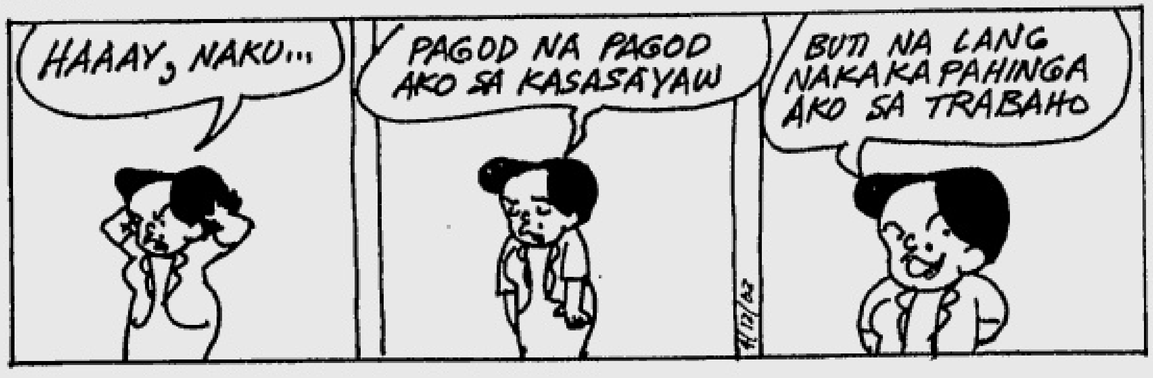
4/26/03

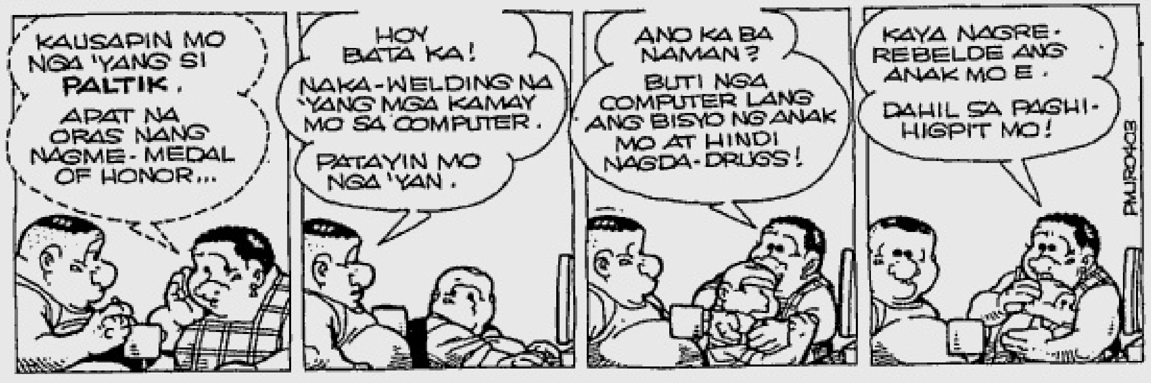
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


HAAAY, NAKU...
PAGOD NA PAGOD AKO SA KASASAYAW
BUTI NA LANG NAKAKAPAHINGA AKO SA TRABAHO

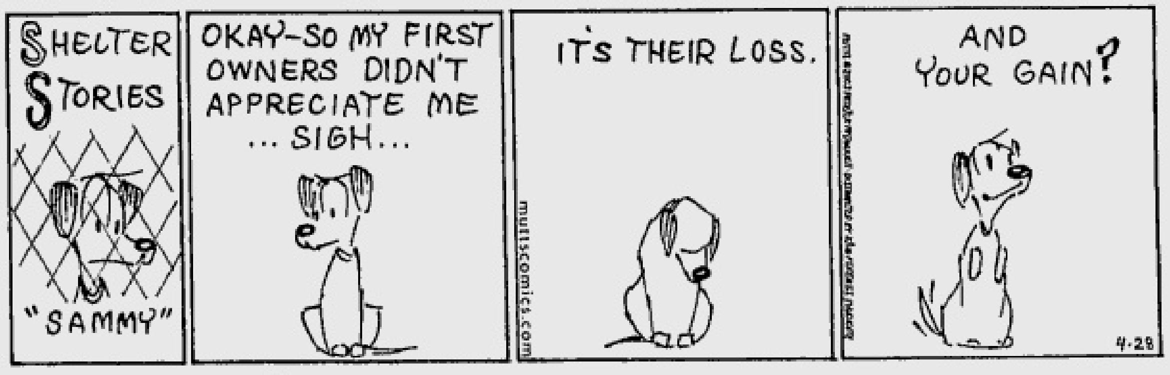
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


KAUSAPIN MO NGA 'YANG SI PALTIK. APAT NA ORAS NANG NAGME-MEDAL OF HONOR...
HOY BATA KA! NAKA-WELDING NA 'YANG MGA KAMAY MO SA COMPUTER.
PATAYIN MO NGA 'YAN.
ANO KA BA NAMAN? BUTI NGA COMPUTER LANG ANG BISYO NG ANAK MO AT HINDI NAGDA-DRUGS!
KAYA NAGRE-REBELDE ANG ANAK MO E.
DAHIL SA PAGHI-HIGPIT MO!
PMJR0403

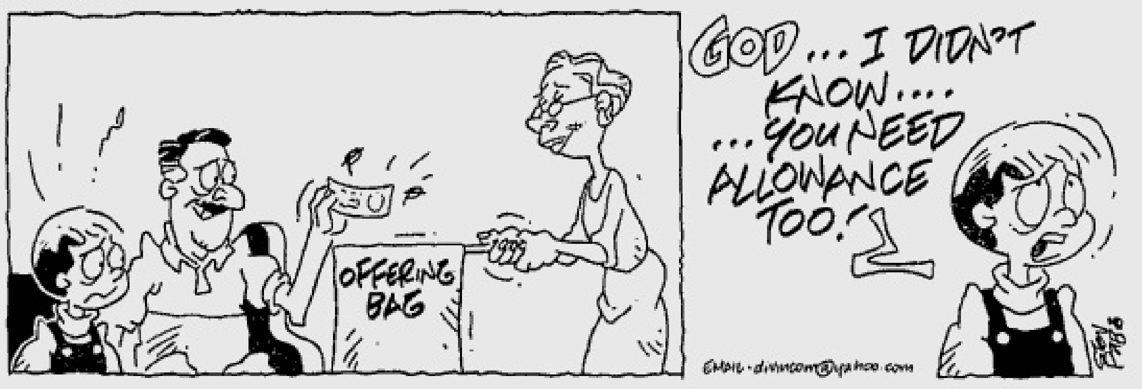
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHELTER STORIES
"SAMMY"
OKAY–SO MY FIRST OWNERS DIDN'T APPRECIATE ME ... SIGH...
IT'S THEIR LOSS.
AND YOUR GAIN?
muttscomics.com
4-28

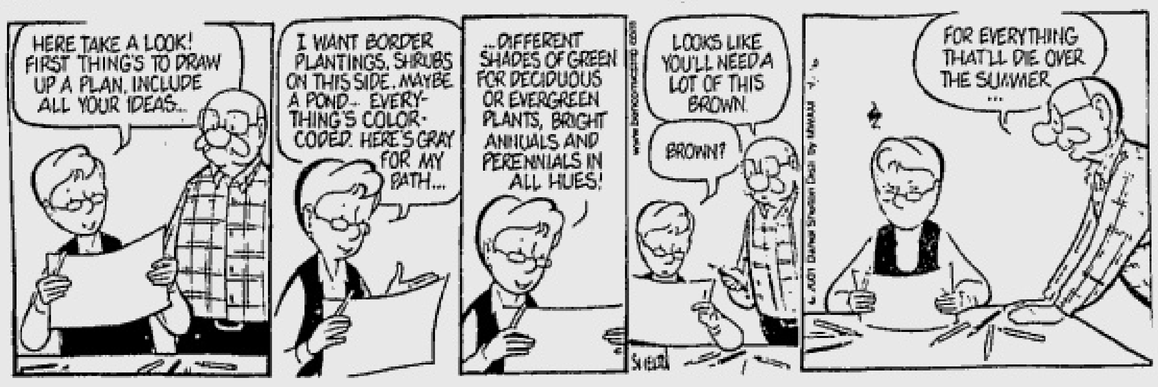
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


OFFERING BAG
GOD ... I DIDN'T KNOW.... ...YOU NEED ALLOWANCE TOO!
EMAIL-divincom@yahoo.com

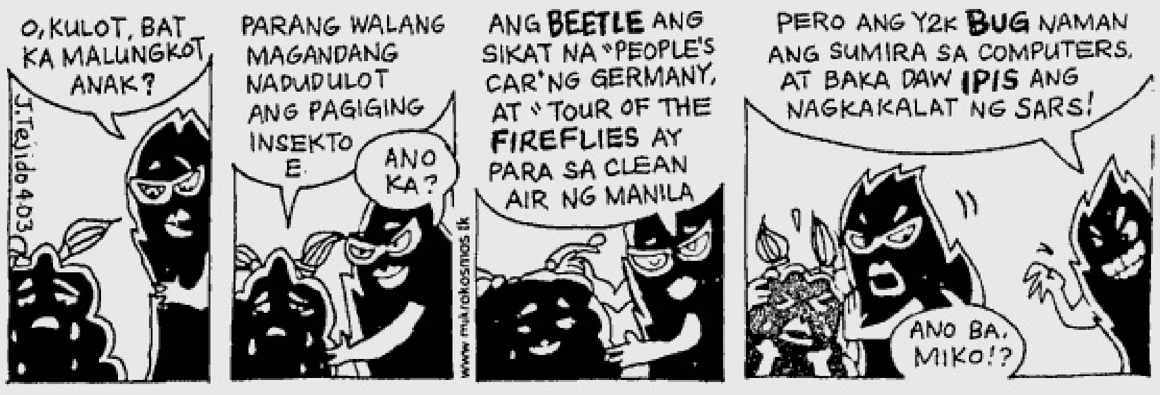
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


HERE TAKE A LOOK! FIRST THING'S TO DRAW UP A PLAN. INCLUDE ALL YOUR IDEAS...
I WANT BORDER PLANTINGS, SHRUBS ON THIS SIDE. MAYBE A POND... EVERYTHING'S COLOR-CODED. HERE'S GRAY FOR MY PATH...
...DIFFERENT SHADES OF GREEN FOR DECIDUOUS OR EVERGREEN PLANTS, BRIGHT ANNUALS AND PERENNIALS IN ALL HUES!
LOOKS LIKE YOU'LL NEED A LOT OF THIS BROWN.
BROWN?
FOR EVERYTHING THAT'LL DIE OVER THE SUMMER ...
SHELTON

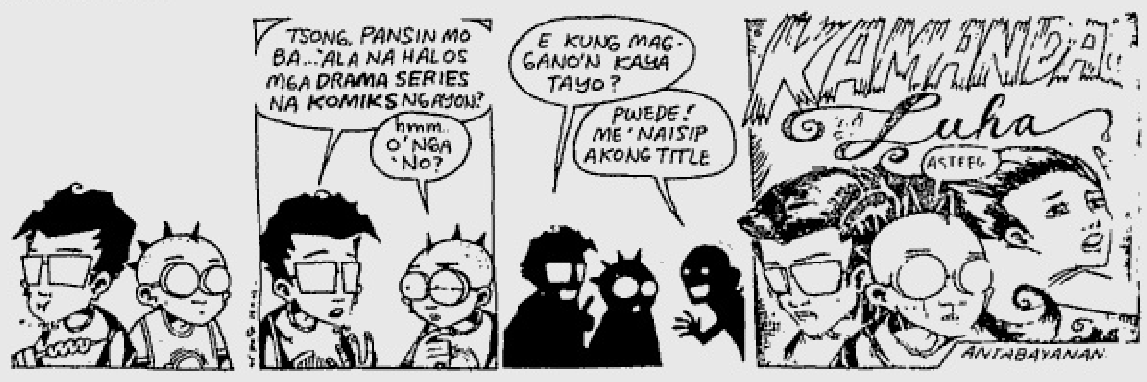
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


O, KULOT, BAT KA MALUNGKOT ANAK?
J.Tejido 4.03
PARANG WALANG MAGANDANG NADUDULOT ANG PAGIGING INSEKTO E.
ANO KA?
www.mikrokosmos.tk
ANG BEETLE ANG SIKAT NA "PEOPLE'S CAR"NG GERMANY, AT "TOUR OF THE FIREFLIES AY PARA SA CLEAN AIR NG MANILA
PERO ANG Y2K BUG NAMAN ANG SUMIRA SA COMPUTERS, AT BAKA DAW IPIS ANG NAGKAKALAT NG SARS!
ANO BA, MIKO!?

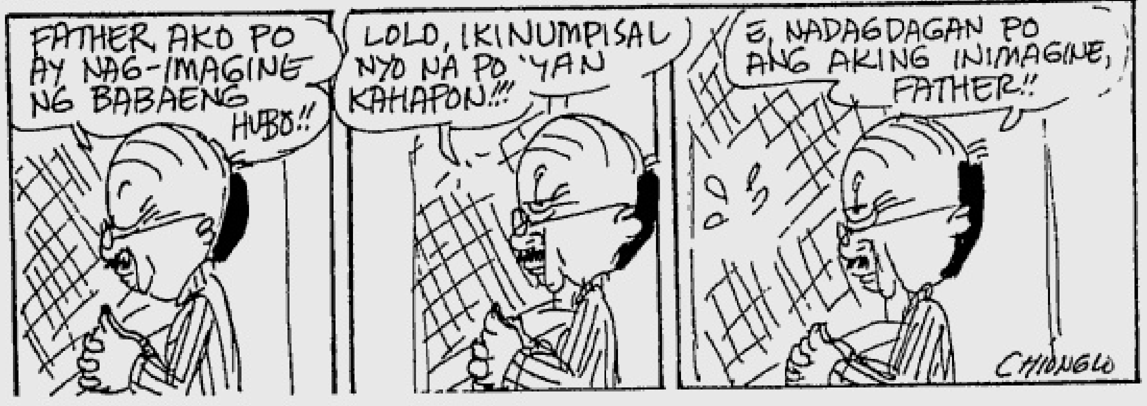
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TSONG, PANSIN MO BA...'ALA NA HALOS MGA DRAMA SERIES NA KOMIKS NGAYON?
hmm.. O'NGA 'NO?
E KUNG MAG-GANO'N KAYA TAYO?
PWEDE! ME' NAISIP AKONG TITLE
KAMANDAG
Luha
ASTEEG
ANTABAYANAN

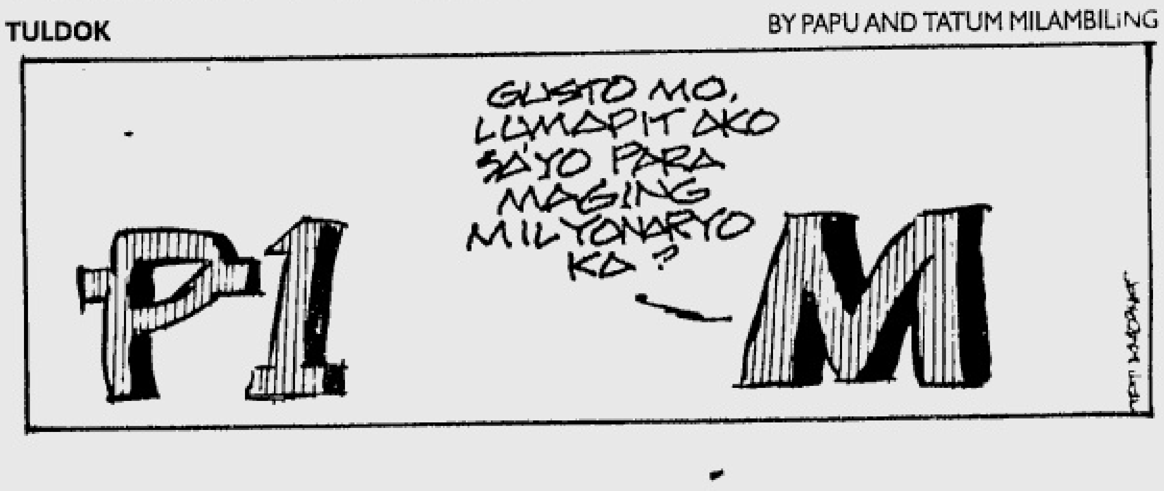
LOVEKNOTS

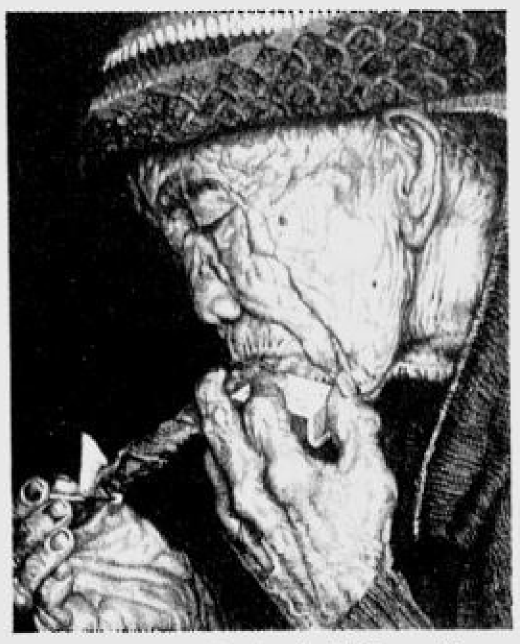
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


FATHER, AKO PO AY NAG-IMAGINE NG BABAENG HUBO!!
LOLO, IKINUMPISAL NYO NA PO 'YAN KAHAPON!!!
E, NADAGDAGAN PO ANG AKING INIMAGINE, FATHER!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


P1
GUSTO MO, LUMAPIT AKO SA'YO PARA MAGING MILYONARYO KA?
M



"MAN Lighting a Hand-rolled Tobacco" by Waling Waling Gorospe

Vasquez at Y, Gorospe at Juan Soy

VISUAL ARTS

PLATON "Tony" Vasquez will open on May 2 "Pinoy Peons III," an exhibit of oil paintings, at Galerie Y (SM Megamall). The series is a tribute to the Pinoy worker, whom the artist considers the building block of the nation. Done in the cubist style, the series shows the brawn of the Filipino worker in various settings. Guests of honor during the opening are Housing Secretary Michael Defensor, Beth Bautista, Natividad Villareal and Don Carlos Allado.

CAFÉ Juan Soy in Greenbelt 1 is hosting Waling Waling Gorospe's seventh solo show, "Cordillera," which opens on May 3. Wrinkle by wrinkle, line by line, Gorospe again captures the humanity and splendor of one of the most enthralling regions of the Philippines. Call 894-4566.

ADRIANO opens his exhibit, "Luntiang Paraiso," on May 8 at the Galerie Y, Glorietta 4, Makati.

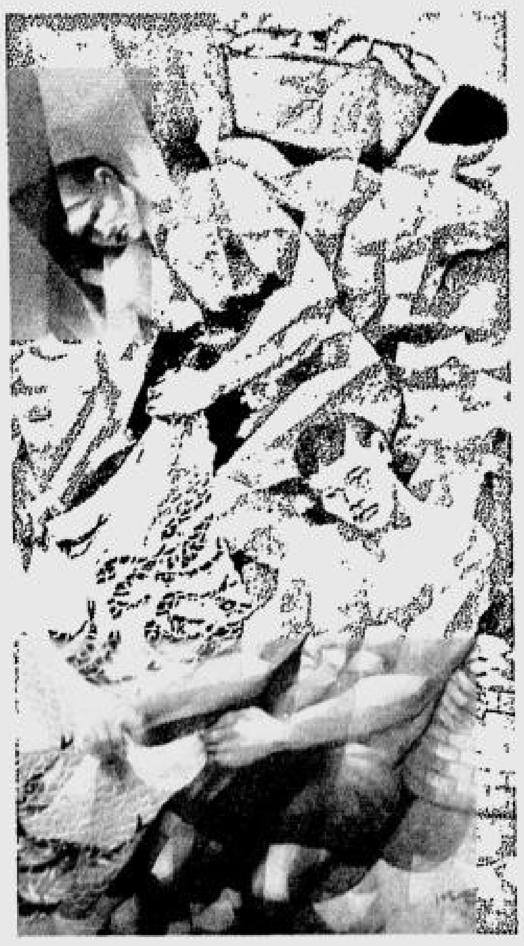
Adriano's images of nature merge the beauty and pleasures of tropical flora and the aquatic world. By breaking down borders of reality, the artist creates a dream-like paradise, eternally fresh and hopeful.

Guests of honor will be Impy Pilapil, Lito Santos and Cid Reyes. Show will run until May 19.

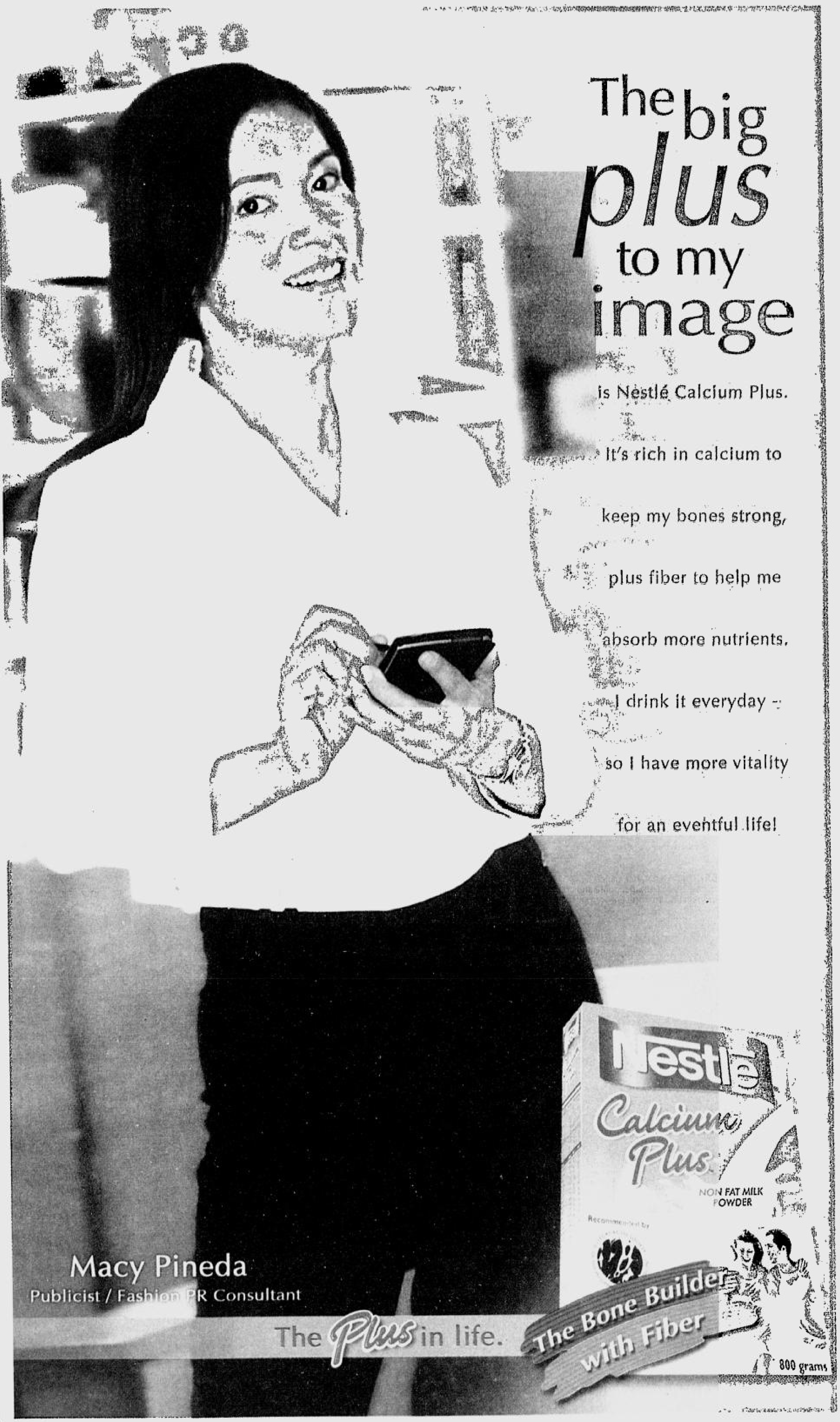
ABSTRACTIONIST Dyun Conanan will hold an exhibit of his new works, "Earthian Spirit," which opens on May 2 and runs until May 17 at the Ad Infinitum Galleries on Blumentritt Street in San Juan. The artist says he tries to create canvases that provide a "space full of energy." Call 726-9015 or 724-3032.

SOME 100 students from 41 high schools in

VASQUEZ/ E7



"SILVER Mines of the Sea" by Platon Vaquez



The big plus to my image

is Nestlé Calcium Plus.
It's rich in calcium to
keep my bones strong,
plus fiber to help me
absorb more nutrients.
I drink it everyday -
so I have more vitality
for an eventful life!

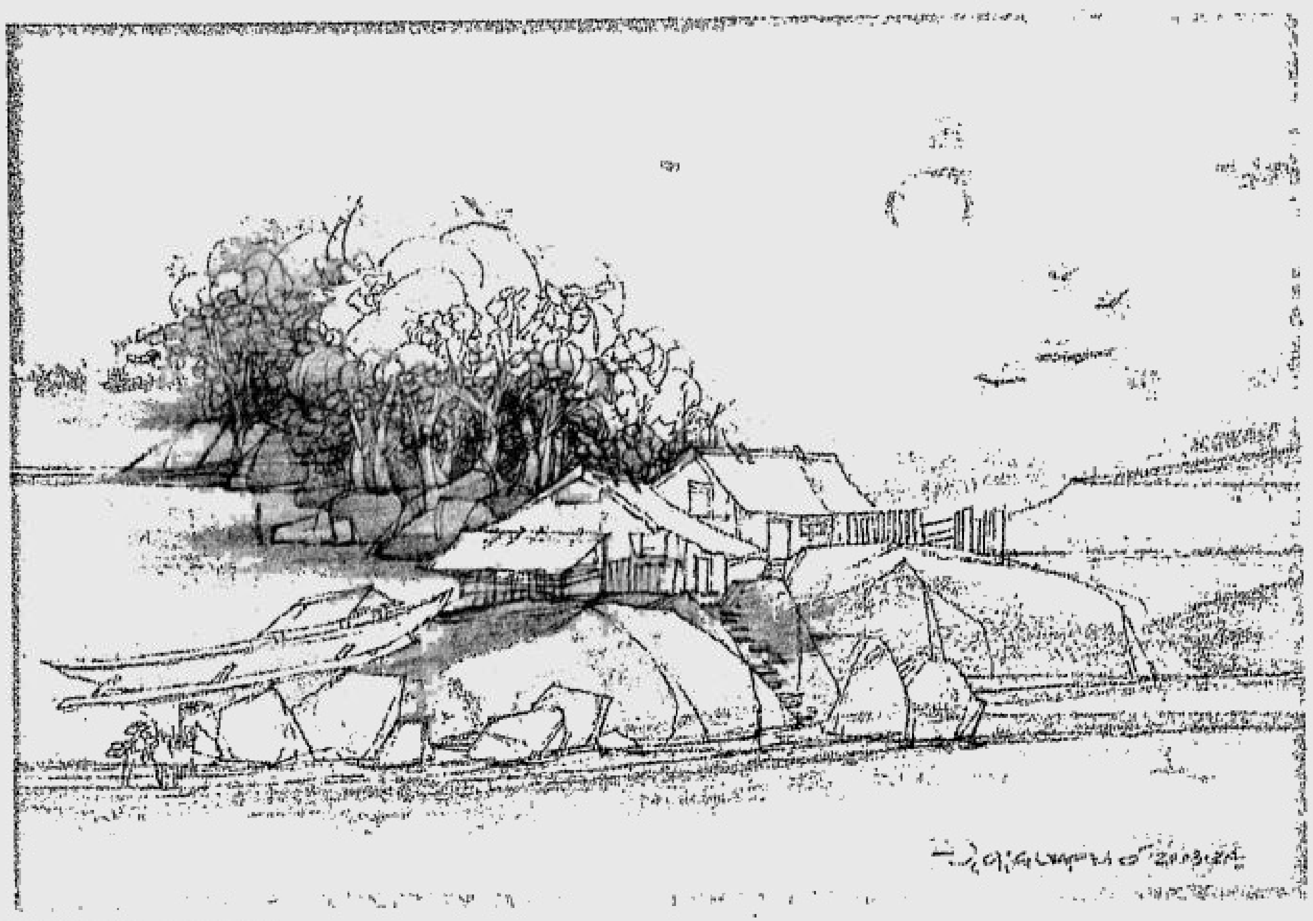
Macy Pineda
Publicist / Fashion PR Consultant

The Plus in life.

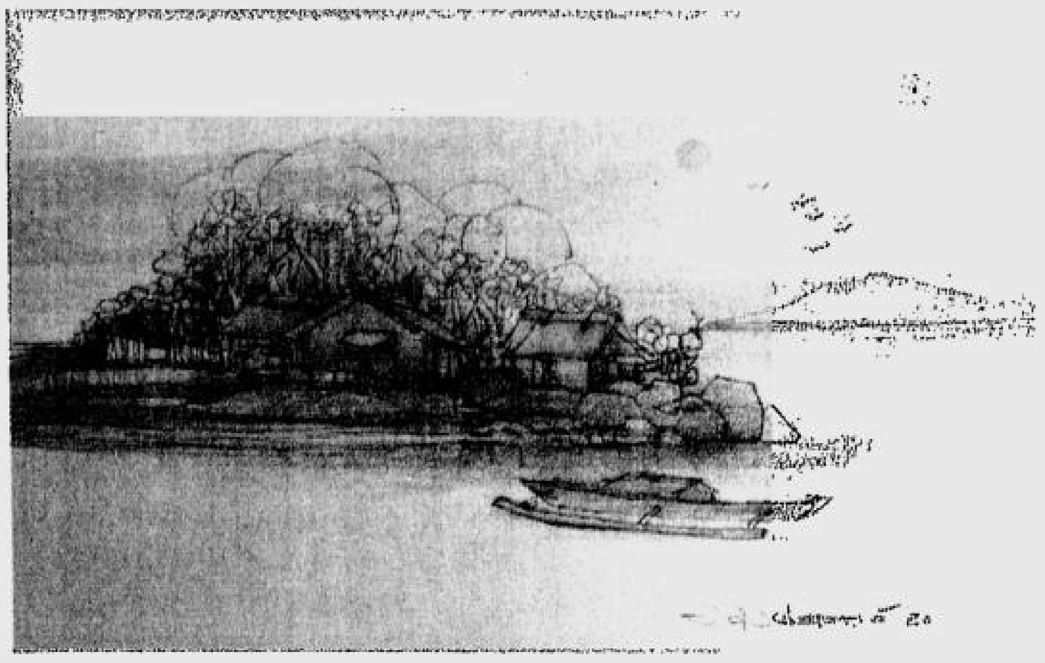
Nestlé Calcium Plus
NON FAT MILK POWDER
The Bone Builder with Fiber
800 grams

Summer na naman, hatakin na ang kaibigan at ka-pamilya.
Para sa cool at enjoy na outing...

don't forget, basta monobloc...
First and Foremost
SINCE 1988
COFTA ORIGINAL
MONOBLOC
Imitated Never Equaled



"RISING Sun," 2003-24



"RISING Sun," 2003-13

Onglepho's 'Rising Sun'

Colored pencils are not just for kids. In the hands of a master, they become high-art instruments

SINCE 1959, James Onglepho has mounted 22 one-man exhibitions, tackling such subjects as the lotus and other flower varieties, landscapes and seascapes. For nearly every one of the show, Onglepho used oil, while experimenting with other mediums, such as watercolor, acrylic, pastel, ink and colored pencil.

Lately he has explored ink drawing. The first works along this vein were featured in the INQUIRER in 2001. It was a chance for art lovers and collectors to appreciate a different side to Onglepho's artistry.

Onglepho then decided to include a number of his colored pencil drawings on Japanese rice paper along with his well-liked oils in his 22nd one-man show last year. Onglepho was happy that the works were well received.

He was encouraged to come up with more colored pencil drawings for last January's "The Birthday Exhibit," which also featured the works of his late mentor at UST, Vicente Manansala, as well as works by buddies Malang and Cris Cruz. His *barung-barong* and seascape drawings were received warmly by the art audience.

Last March, while fixing his studio, Onglepho found a box of colored boards. He could not even remember where he got them. He figured that they would serve as ideal canvases for his next project.

In using colored pencils, Onglepho has discovered what he calls as the "realm of creation," and the "realm of the poetic," which, he says, he didn't realize using other mediums.

The "Rising Sun" series features fishing villages from Onglepho's youth, when he was starting out as a painter. He brings to life a sense of beauty, a vivid, life-like rendering of the community he will never forget.

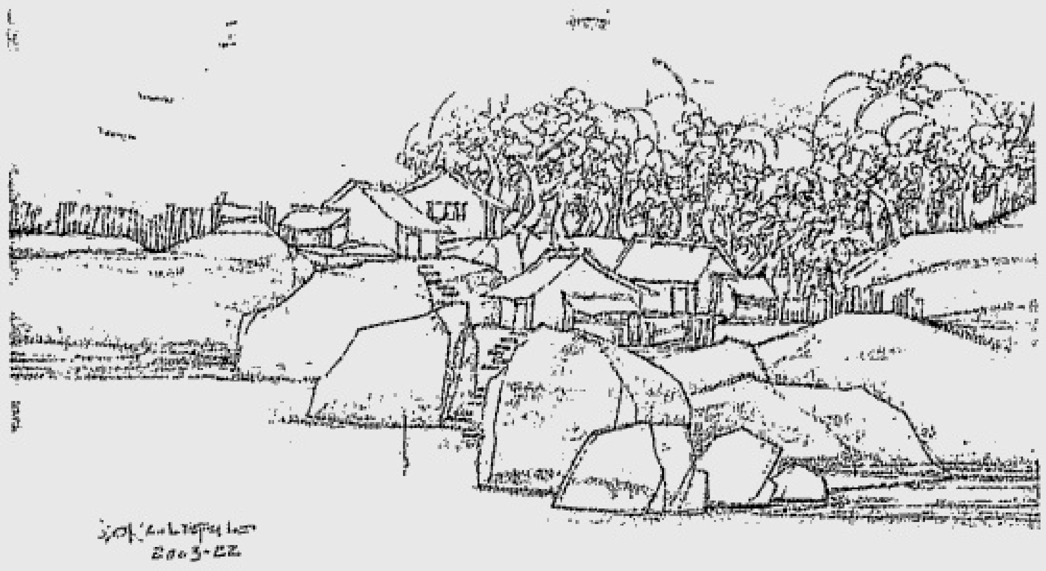
Onglepho remembers dropping out of the UST School of Fine Arts in 1958 to prepare for his first one-man show in Manila. He went back to Zamboanga, his hometown, made many friends in the fishing villages of Talusan, Alecia, Margos, Ipil and Kabasalan.

The quiet, peaceful atmosphere seemed to invoke a different world altogether. It inspired Onglepho very much in his art.

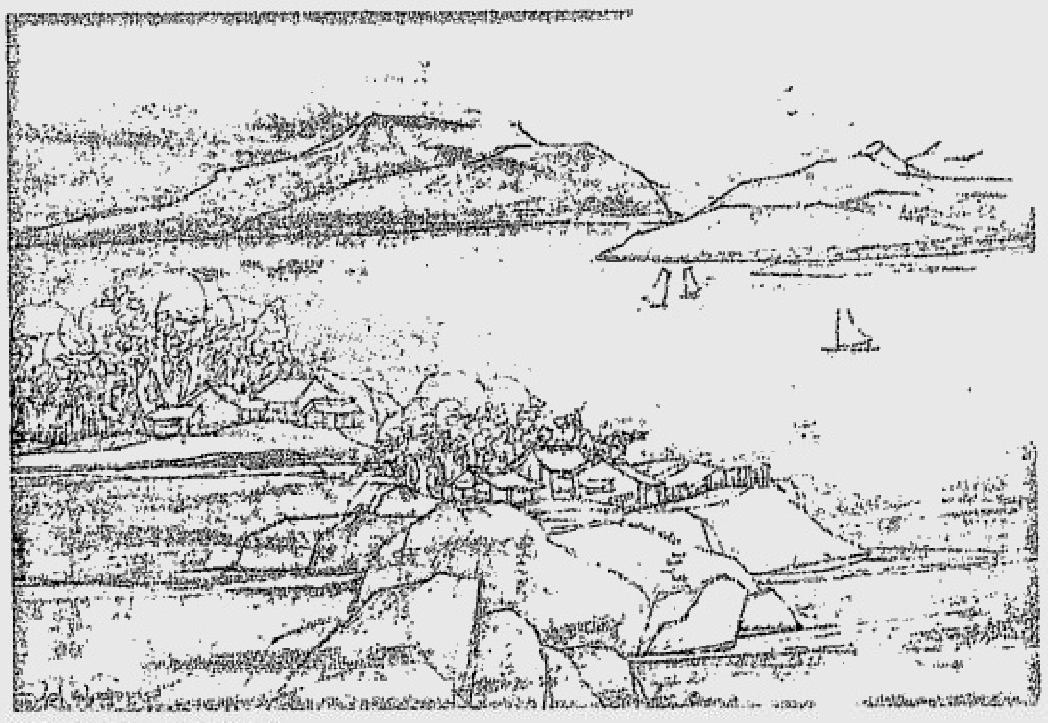
To this day, Onglepho feels that those memories have left a deep imprint in his mind, and they just come naturally in his strokes. These fishing villages are not products of creative imagination, but of vivid recollection.

Onglepho shows that colored pencils are not just for kids and young students. They can also be a medium for a work of art if one can control the quality of the images to meet the high standards of drawing.

Onglepho's "Rising Sun" series, with the help of a color fixative, is a proof of this.

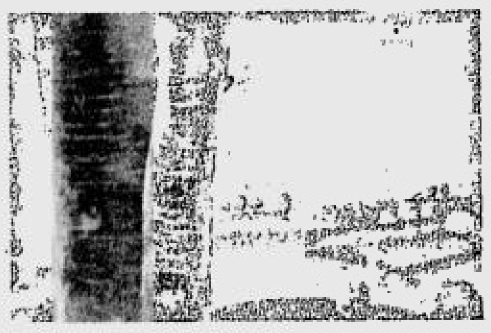


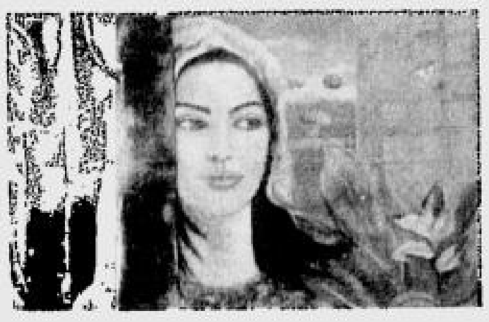
"RISING Sun," 2003-22



"RISING Sun," 2003-24

Tres Reyes comes into his own





EDWIN Tres Reyes, the former art director of multinational ad agency Ammirati Puris Lintas and now a full-time painter, opened his first major exhibition titled "Playgrounds of Colour" at Galerie Joaquin on April 25.

A multiawarded painter and a product of the University of Santo Tomas School of Fine Arts, Tres Reyes first worked as a designer of various consumer products before he joined an advertising firm as illustrator and visualizer. He eventually became the art director of the London-based multinational advertising firm.

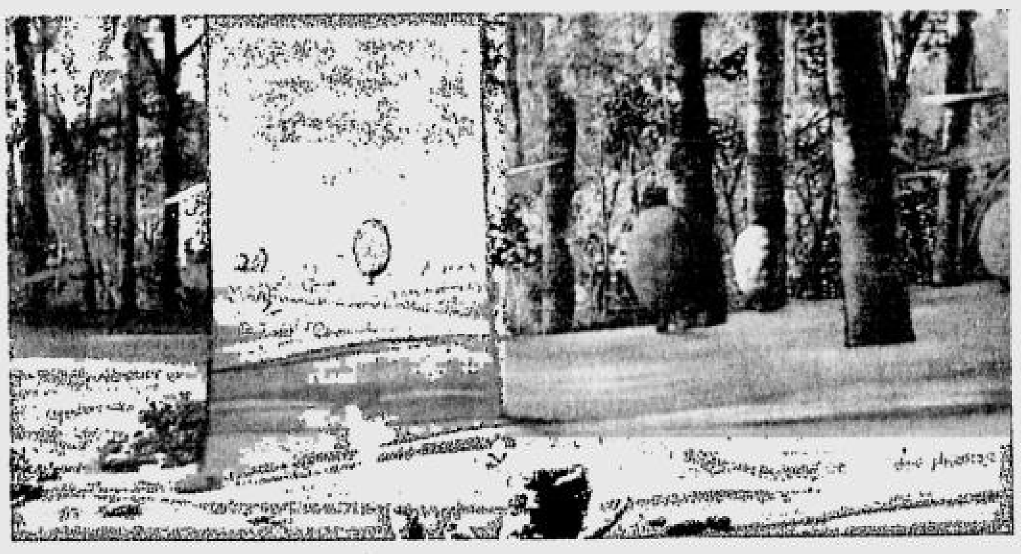
He has given up a lucrative career in advertising to follow his lifelong passion: painting.

For "Playgrounds of Colour," Tres Reyes acknowledges the inspiration of noted artists Raul Lebajo, Prudencio Lamarroza, Hermes Alegre and Dominic Rubio.

The show is on view until May 9.

Galerie Joaquin is located on the 2/F 371 corner P. Guevarra St. and Montessori Lane, Addition Hills, San Juan.

Call 723-9253 or (0917) 492-0076, or e-mail galeriejoaquin@yahoo.com.



Bulacan and Taytay artists exhibit new works

THE GROUP Artists of Taytay

LAKAN Sining ng Bulacan opens today an exhibit in celebration of the First Bulacan Arts Festival at the Philippine Heart Center gallery in Quezon City.

Participating artists are Joya, Malang, Al Perez, Raul Isidro, Fil Delacruz, Philip Victor, Fred Villanueva, Soler, Jose Marasigan, Ben Francisco, Danny Pangan, Rudolf Gonzales, Godofredo Reyes, Salvador Ching, Willie Reyes, Joey Angeles, Ramon Hilario, Jess Gellada, Nilo Badajos, Mario Santiago, Tats Villanueva, Wilfredo Offee Maria, Aris Bagtas, Ernie Velasquez, Cesar Cruz, Mike Danganan, Andrew de Guzman, Jose Caoili, CJ de Silva, Nap Trono, Eric Marquez, Mon Castillo, Cris Velasco, Nestor Villanueva, Eric Marquez, Cris Pasco, Rey Salamat, Edmon Samonte, Sony Yniguez, Jun Alvarez, June de los Santos, Nemy Macapugay, Gleff Victor, Jes Santos, Marvin Samonte and Romeo Forbes.

* * *

The Tabing-dagat painters of Hagonoy, Bulacan, is holding the exhibit "Yaman Kalikasan" at the Puso Nino Building in the Hagonoy *poblacion*. The exhibit, which opened yesterday, depicts Hagonoy's rich natural landscape.

Artists include Al Perez, Cee Cadid, Fil Delacruz, Goding Mercado Reyes, Cesar Cruz, Nilo Bajados, Wilfredo Reyes, Paz Cadid, Jeimee Cadid, Mike Danganan, Tess Carolino, Luis Bugayong, Jose Santos, and Dalisay Ople-San Jose. Call (044) 667-2758, (0919) 250-0584 or (0919) 615-0913.

* * *

The Group Artists of Taytay (GAT) will hold the exhibit "Colors of May" at the Pasig City Museum on May 3-17.

Artists include Alvin Anchinges, Art Aquino, Roger Baligaya, Gary Cabling, Ric Cabuutan, Richard Calderon, Joel Cruz, Armando Cruz, Ronie Cruz, Ron Dasal, Jaime Del Rosario, Danny Doce, Dexter Flores, Noli Flores, Rino Felizardo, Roger Fernandez, Dion Edwin Francisco, Lope Francisco, Nelson Francisco, Adrian Francisco, Arnold Francisco, Darwin Guevarra, Jewel Javier, Rodie Julian, Alfren Lacampuenga, Boy Lacampuenga, During Lacampuega, Ronald Limayo, Precy Limayo, Hari Martin Lualhati, Jon Magalona, Pablo Mahinay, Reggie Micu, Jeffrey Brian Perez, Warren Legaspi, Felix Rollo, Juan Santillan, Bien Santos, Nelson Vallestero, Ferdie Villanueva, Randy Vitales, Arnold Zamora, Freddie Zapanta, Paula Zapanta, Pons Zapanta, Ranilo Zapanta and Ruping Zapanta

ARTIST Adriano

Vasquez at . . .

From page E5

Metro Manila, Cavite and Antipolo participated in the Rotary Club of Makati West 8th Likhang Sining On-the-Spot Painting Contest.

Participants had to work on the theme "My Ideal Philippines."

Several partners of Rotary Club of Makati West supported the project. Philippine Airlines gave bags with the art materials, Jollibee and Max's Fried Chicken provided lunch and snacks, Coca-Cola Bottling Company the drinks, and Trolly Treats the flavored French fries.

Judges were visual artist Imelda Cajipe-Endaya, journalist Lita Logarta and Benjamin Elayda III, a lecturer in art history.

Winners were: first prize, Bernadette Mary Umali of Ramon Magsaysay High-España; second prize, Alvin Fajardo, Ramon Magsaysay High-España; and third prize, Jeane Renee Nubla, Philippine Cultural High School.

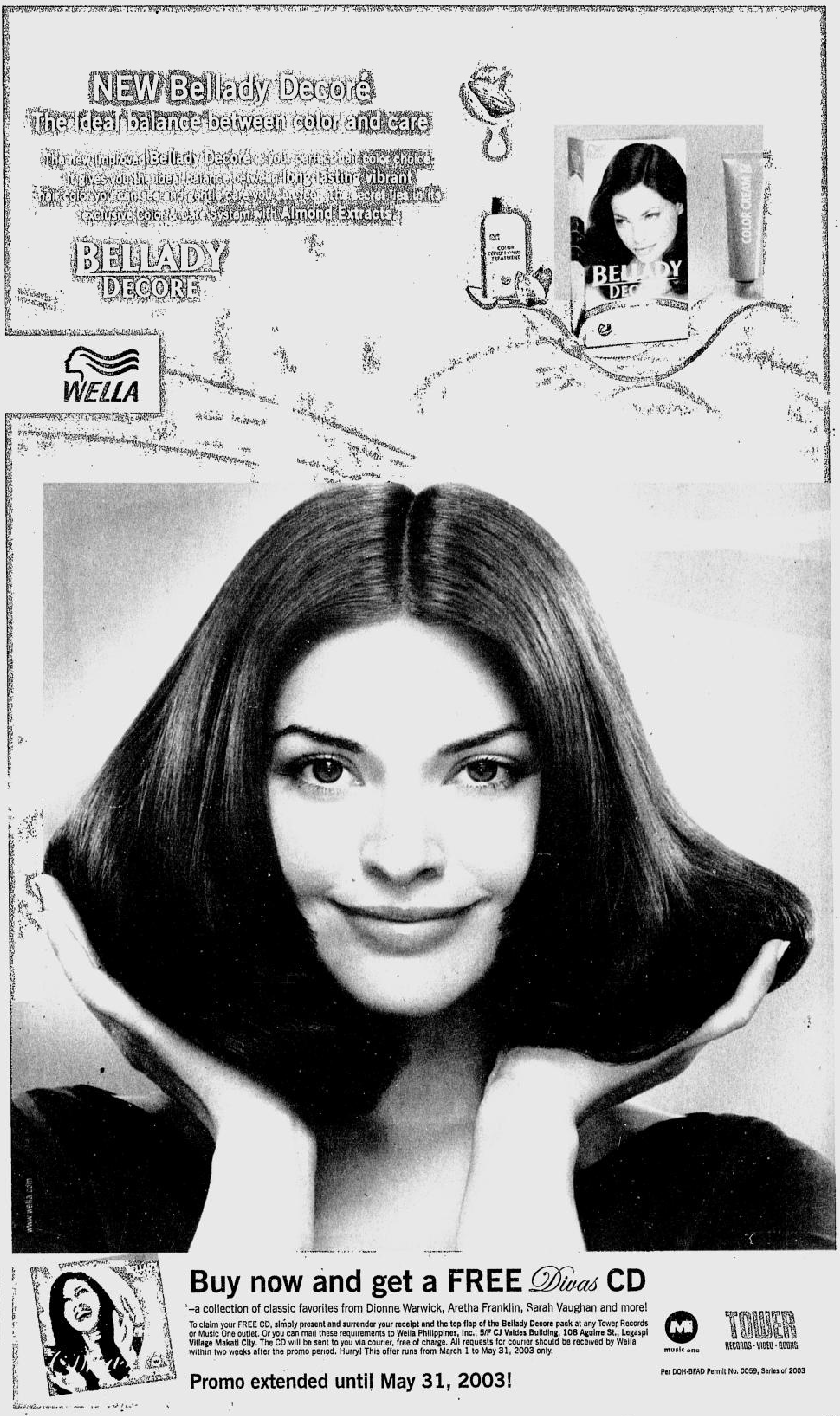
Each received a trophy and cash of P8,000, P5,000, and P2,500, respectively.

Ten consolation prizes of P500 each were given to: Joezel Rizi Nubla, Philippine Cultural High School; Chino Villanueva, Makati High School; Juan Paolo Vico, Rizal High School; Jessah Deus, Rizal High School; Michael Villadolid, Ramon Magsaysay High School; Al-Yasser Shahanie Alim, San Isidro National High School; Jonnalyn Wong, Arellano High School; Caryl Ventura, Torres High School; Reynan Sanchez, Baesa High School; and Joey Albert Gacosta, Polytechnic University of the Philisippines.

AYALA Museum's Escuela sa Museo offers "vintage" workshops, which include Beginner's Oil Painting 6-9 p.m., Wednesday nights, May 7-June 25; Beginner's Watercolor Painting 6-9 p.m., Thursday nights, May 8-June 26; Chinese Landscape Painting 6-9 p.m., Friday nights, May 9-June 27; and Basic Drawing 2 -5 p.m., Saturday afternoons, May 10-June 7.

New classes include Basic Ikebana 2-5 p.m., Saturdays, May 10-31; and Puppet Making 9-12 p.m., May 3-24. Escuela sa Museo's Oil and Watercolor alumni can enroll in the Intermediate Watercolor Painting 5:30-8:30 p.m., Friday nights, June 6-July 25. Call 810-8407.

TEEN artist Mara Cruz of the Saturday Group is exhibiting her works in the show "Visual Reflections" at the Asia Art Gallery (5/L Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong) until April 30. During the opening, guests included Malang, Cris Cruz and Magoo Valencia.



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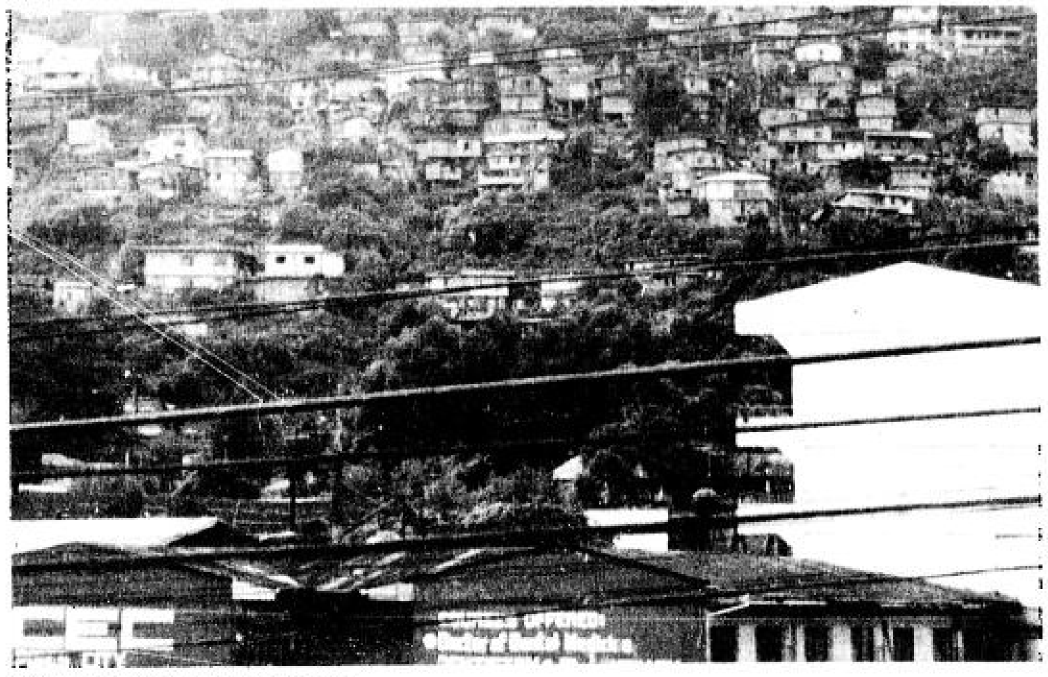

YOU call this the City of Pines?

For dying Baguio, letters from the heart

SPACED OUT

Augusto F. Villalon

JUDGING from the letters that readers have sent in response to the columns of the past two weeks on Baguio, the city holds a very special place in the Filipino psyche.

However, Baguio is degrading fast. It struggles feebly to remain the City of Pines beloved by many Filipinos.

Today's Baguio is no longer the Hill Station conceived by the American colonial government that commissioned prominent American architect Daniel Burnham to plan a mountain retreat for Americans trying to escape the sweltering lowland temperature.

To the older generation, the Baguio of today is not the Baguio of their youth. To the younger generation, Baguio has become one of the many Philippine cities from Dagupan to Davao with that boring generic look of "development."

Symbols of development in the Philippines seem to be the same generic malls, fast-food chains, and bland office buildings regardless of the individuality that every city once had. Baguio, the only City of Pines in the country, is rapidly going the same generic way, with malls being built, and, would you believe, flyovers being proposed left and right.

Unless private sector action is launched to stem the reckless shortsightedness of public officialdom, bid the City of Pines goodbye.

Special place

We received a number of letters expressing

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Education Revolution posts gains in Cagayan de Oro, Iloilo

By Butch Hernandez
Contributor

THREE large academic institutions and a real estate business group are preparing to adopt 13 public schools in Cagayan de Oro City.

Imelda Pagtolun-an, Liberal Arts dean of Xavier University, and Rachel Polistico, deputy director of the South East Asia Rural Social Leadership Institute (Searsolin), have closely coordinated with Elizabeth Cabuguas of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power (FWPP) to work out the details of a comprehensive adoption program.

Xavier University is a premier academic institution in Cagayan de Oro City. Searsolin is Xavier University's social development arm.

Xavier University, through College of Education dean Amor de Torres, will also host the FWWPP Mentoring the Mentors pilot program for the Bukidnon State College.

Pagtolun-an is organizing an adopting team while Polistico is assessing public schools in the villages being served by Searsolin's Appropriate Technologies division.

Meanwhile, Eric Damasing, vice president of the sprawling Cagayan de Oro College (COC), which the Damasing family founded several years ago, requested assistance from FWWPP president Dr. Maria L. Ayuyao regarding the Adopt-A-School program with the view to making it the social development program of COC.

Colleges and universities are required to have social or community development programs before they can secure their accreditation with the Philippine Accrediting Association for Schools, Colleges and Universities (Paascu).

Rudy Menes, general manager of Pueblo de Oro, a real estate investment firm belonging to Guillermo Luchangco's Investment Capital Corporation Group of Companies, said they will adopt the public schools in at least three barangays in Cagayan de Oro City in line with their corporate citizenship program. Menes is inviting other business and civic groups to join Pueblo de Oro in the adoption project.

PUEBLO de Oro general manager Rodolfo Meneses and Joan Manaloto, assistant manager (back to camera), discuss school adoption mechanics with FWWPP's Beth Cabuguas.

Mentors program in Iloilo

Ida Ebanillo, superintendent of the Iloilo City Schools, was so impressed by Evelyn Mejillano's presentation of the FWWPP's Mentoring the Mentors program that she wasted no time in finding out if the FWWPP could rework the program for principals and master teachers in the public schools.

Ebanillo, together with other representatives of the education department and the Commission on Higher Education and the deans of the various colleges of education in Iloilo, was invited by Mentoring the Mentors program director Stella Rufino to a meeting hosted by the West Visayas State University to discuss the details of the program.

Rufino had earlier said that Mentoring the Mentors targets teacher-education institutions, which play a crucial role in shaping the values and motivations of those considering a career in teaching.

Ebanillo saw Mentoring the Mentors' potential to foster qualitative change in principals and public school teachers. She conferred with Rufino to work out a pilot session for the 60 schools under her jurisdiction, tentatively set for May 12-16.

Also at this meeting, the University of the Philippines-Visayas said it was interested in incorporating the Mentoring the Mentors approach in its very active volunteer program where UP graduates sign up to live and teach in various mission areas in the region for one year.

The author is the executive director of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power.

CAGAYAN de Oro College VP Eric Damasing (behind desk)

XAVIER University-Searsolin adoption core team map out their program for the coming school year.

Victor Bella holds painting and crafts workshop

INDUSTRIAL artist Victor Bella, who graduated with a degree in fine arts at the Maastricht Academy of Visual Arts, Holland, will hold a special painting and crafts workshop series this summer.

Painting lessons are offered for kids and adults, focusing on acrylic, oil, watercolor and drawing.

Group courses include artistic candle making with decorative mold making, decorative painting on glass metal and ceramics, flower sculpture, figurine making, silicon rubber mold making, decorative herbal and aroma therapy soap with mold-making techniques and decorative transparent soap making. Painting tutorials are also offered.

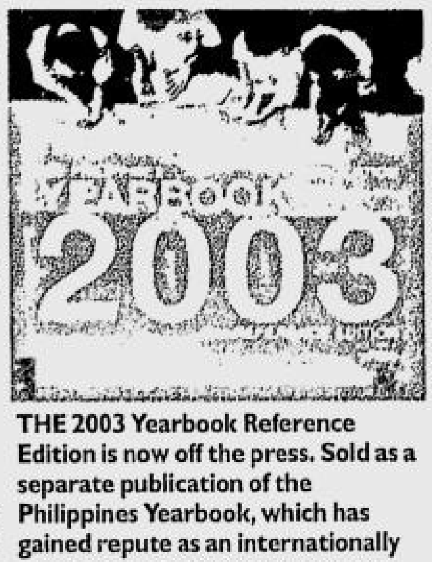
Visit www.geocities.com/victor_bella for work samples or www.geocities.com/victor_bella/schedule.html for schedule of workshop.

Call 834-7678 or (0917)757-6690.

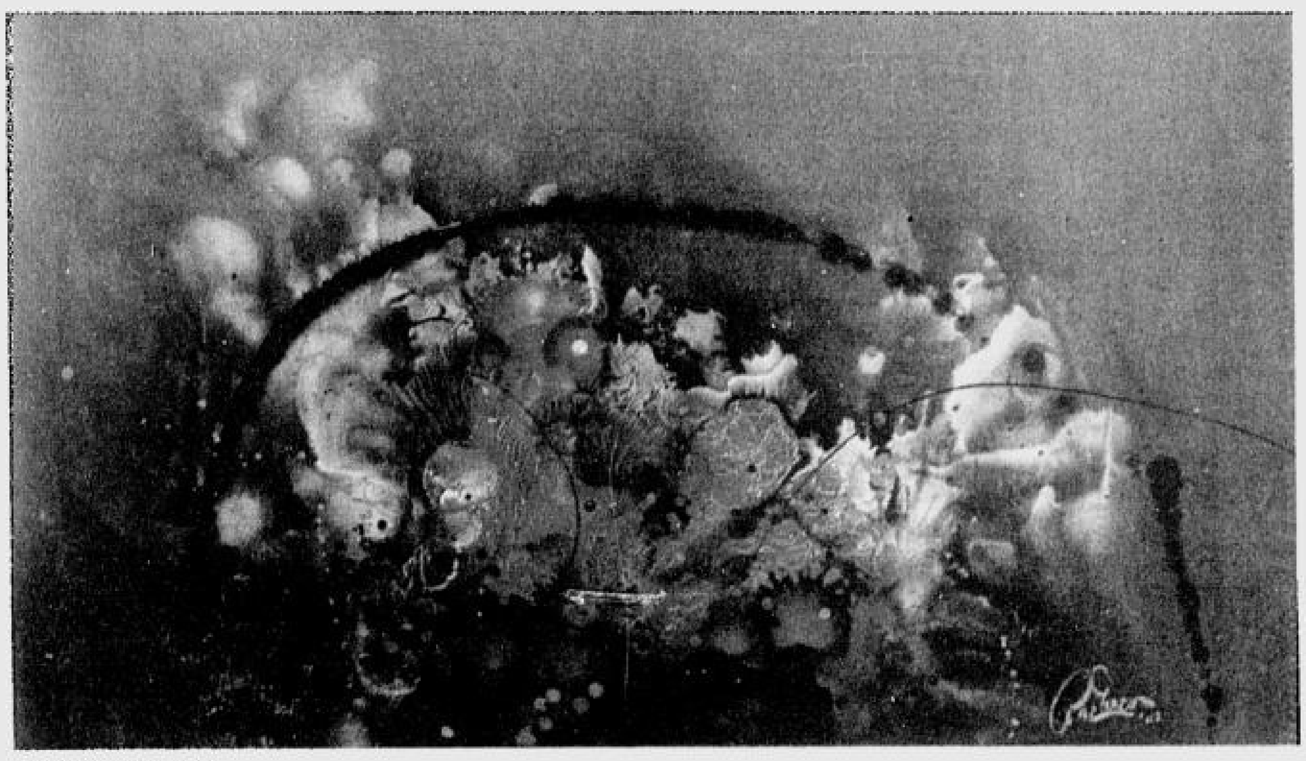
Registration is until May 1. Lessons begin on May 3.

PAMANTASAN ng Lungsod ng Maynila president Benjamin Tayavas presents the certificate conferring the Doctorate of Humanities honoris causa to veteran Spanish journalist and writer Jose Rodriguez during ceremonies held recently at the Philippine International Convention Center.

PHOTOGRAPHER, philanthropist and Ayala Corporation chair Jaime Zobel de Ayala donated to the American people three of his works commemorating the seven astronauts who perished in the tragic crash of the Space Shuttle Columbia in February 2003. Accompanied by a haiku written by filmmaker Marilou Diaz Abaya, the artworks were unveiled at a reception hosted by US Ambassador Francis J. Ricciardone at the US Embassy on April 24.



THE 2003 Yearbook Reference Edition is now off the press. Sold as a separate publication of the Philippines Yearbook, which has gained repute as an internationally recognized chronicler of Philippine progress, the Yearbook contains valuable information and data needed by individuals and businesses. Among its contents is the top 1,000 corporations in the country based on data from the Securities and Exchange Commission. Call 527-2411 or 524-6585.


"DEEP Challenge"

Have a glimpse of Pacheco's 'Artworld'

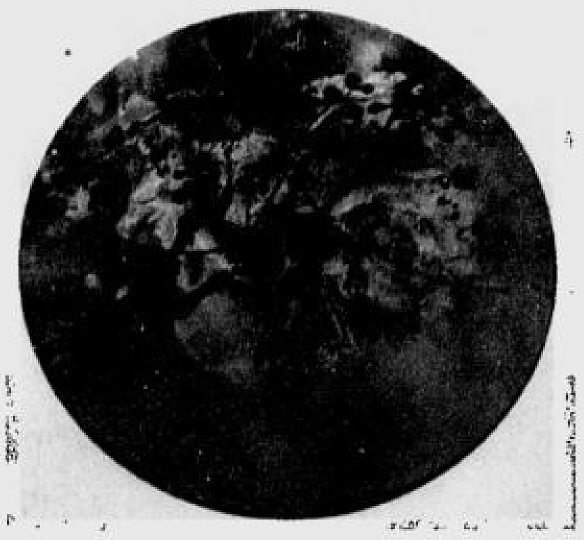
RAFAEL "Paeng" Pacheco, an exponent of finger painting, will hold a one-man show, "The Artworld of Pacheco," April 30, 6 p.m., at the SM Megamall Art Center in Mandaluyong City. Theme of the exhibit is The River of Life, in keeping with the artist's commitment to the protection of the environment.

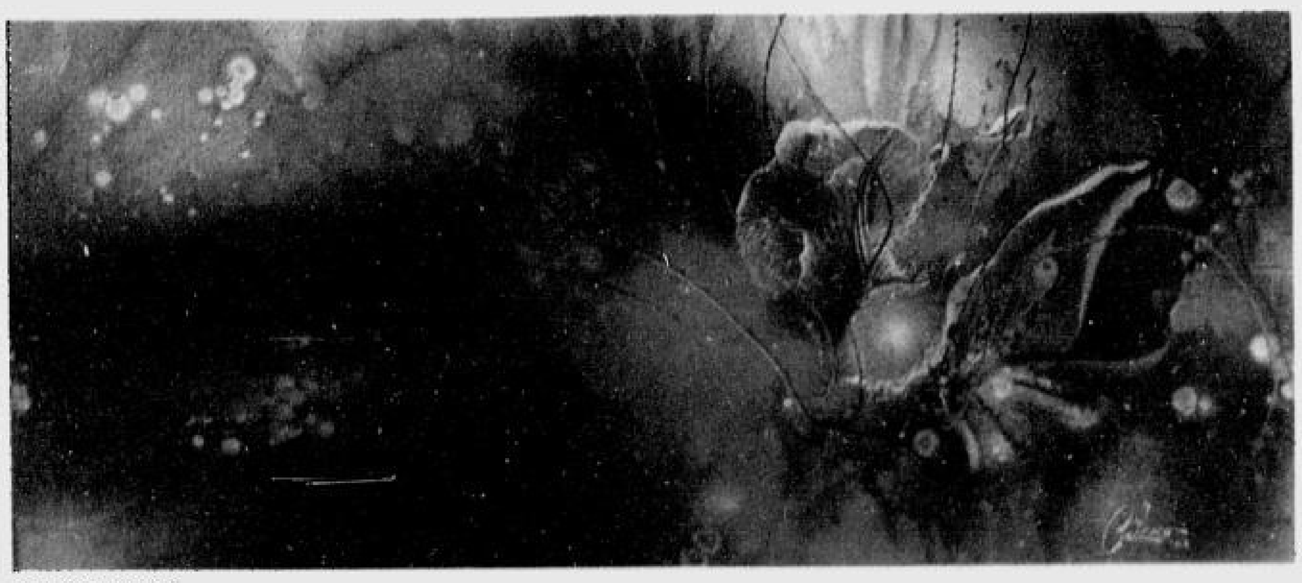
Among the works to be exhibited are huge canvases of underwater scenes featuring coral, fish, sea grass and other marine creatures, all done in the artist's splash-and-fingerbrush style of painting. The most significant of the pieces is a 20-ft high, 12.5-ft wide metal work of welded brass sheet and stainless steel titled "The Filipino Artist." It depicts a winged human figure in the beginning of flight. Too big for the Art Center, the sculpture will be displayed in two parts, but will be put together permanently until a suitable location is found.

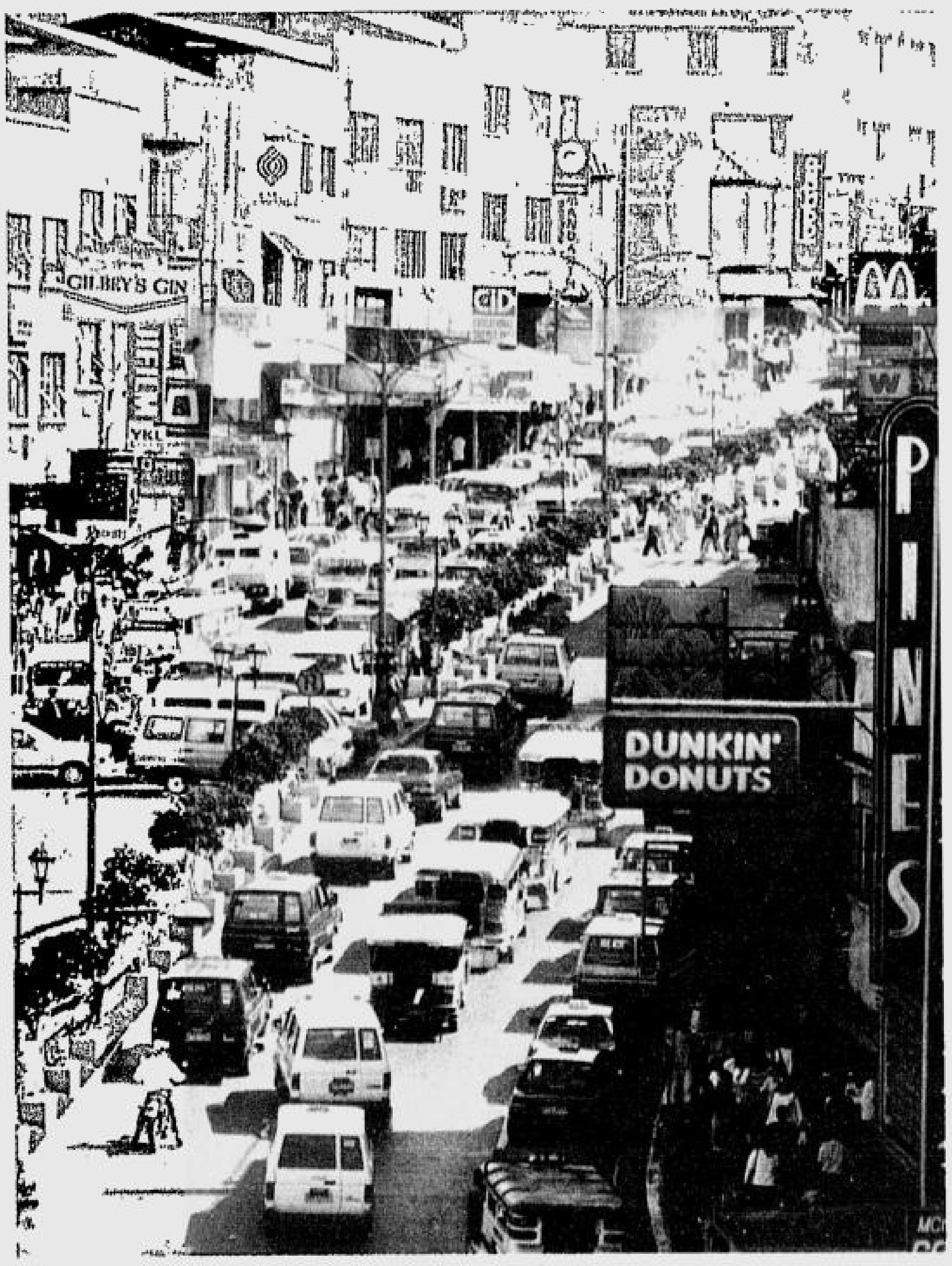
Pacheco has dedicated the large sculpture to his fellow artists.

The 20 or so marine murals in the exhibit are among the biggest Pacheco has created.

"The Artworld of Pacheco" will run up to May 13. Expected at the exhibit's opening are some National Artists, leading visual artists, writers and civic leaders. A number of public art activities will be held for the duration of the show, including lecture-demonstrations on finger painting, interaction art and on-the-spot painting featuring leading artists, lectures on art techniques and media, and others. For details, call the Pacheco Art Gallery, SM Megamall, tels. 634 2422 and 653-0714.


"HIDDEN Perils"


"RIVER of Life"



DIVISORIA on an ordinary day? No, it's Session Road.

For dying Baguio, letters from the heart

From page F1

concern over the fate of Baguio, proving that it is truly one of the most special places in the Philippines.

"Please allow me to share my frustration of this dying city. They [city authorities] say that they are developing the city but their idea of development is to put more concrete, an idea that seems to resonate throughout the nation," writes a Baguio resident.

A hotel administrator from Manila writes, "I just came back from Baguio City yesterday (April 20) and I know what exactly you're talking about. The fact is, it was a big disappointment for me and my friends, especially when upon entering the city, we saw the mushrooming concrete houses swathing the mountains and hills. They were such an eyesore... I kept wondering what on earth happened to the spic and span Baguio I first saw... what happened to the architectural legacy the city used to be revered for."

The same respondent continues, "Burnham Lagoon was another source of disenchantment. The water was murky, the boat we rented had a broken oar ... "

Offering a new perspective on development, a reader writes, "Baguio must never be treated and developed like Manila. Baguio is environmentally unique in the Philippines and as such, unique laws and ordinances need to be applied."

He continues, "Let's pass a law declaring Baguio and its environs a national park or something that would protect it from over-development. Ordinances must be passed to govern architectural styles and limiting building heights... We want a Baguio where we can breathe and smell the pines, not diesel fumes."

"What I can say is that bringing back the Baguio of old needs a lot of will and sacrifice and a lot of brainstorming (on the part of government officials). The modernization due to prevalent technologies and age should go hand in hand with the effort and will to preserve the real essence why Mr. Burnham chose Baguio of all cities and places in the Philippines to establish the recreation place for Yankee servicemen," writes a Baguio resident who works for the DOTC.

He continues: "The traffic mess of the city proper is the result of messy transport management coupled with the park management's using one lane of major thoroughfares of the city for parking."

Offering constructive suggestions, a former Baguio resident says, "Baguio needs proper zoning. The trees have to be saved and cars banned from certain areas. In certain hillsides that used to be filled with trees, all one sees are GI sheets. And [you] wonder why it floods now when it didn't before? ... Wouldn't Session Road be great if cars were banned? Restaurants could put up outdoor cafés."

Among the letter writers, there is a consensus that Baguio is a city of special character. However its pines are disappearing and tin roofs and concrete have taken over the landscape. Diesel engine emissions pollute the Baguio air.

There is much concern whether political will see that the special character of Baguio, which is vanishing rapidly, be retained. The authorities should work hand in hand with the people of Baguio to retain the city's special character.

The loss of Baguio's special character leads to a loss of tourist income which many residents rely upon for their livelihood. Therefore, many respondents feel that rather than "modernizing" Baguio, a balance should be struck between maintaining the old charm of the city while injecting modern facilities that are unobtrusive and compatible with the old charm.

Is that a tall order? As a last word, one reader states, "We should take the good examples from our neighboring countries to see what can be done with keeping the character of Baguio."

If you feel you can contribute your energy to keep Baguio the City of Pines, contact Team Baguio at 108 Session Road in Baguio, telephones 442- 6678 and 442- 4379.

Notice: The Heritage Conservation Society is having its annual general membership meeting at 4 p.m. on April 30 at the Mil Novecientos Restaurant at Remedios Circle. Call 522-2497 and 521-2239.

Feedback is welcome at afvillalon@hotmail.com

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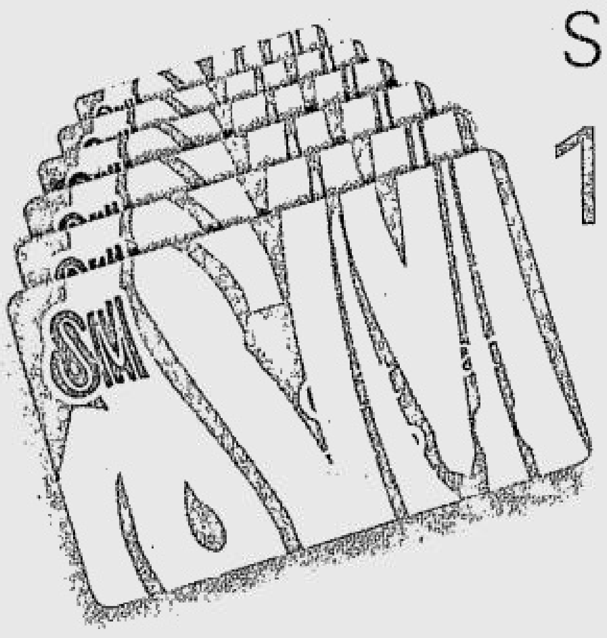

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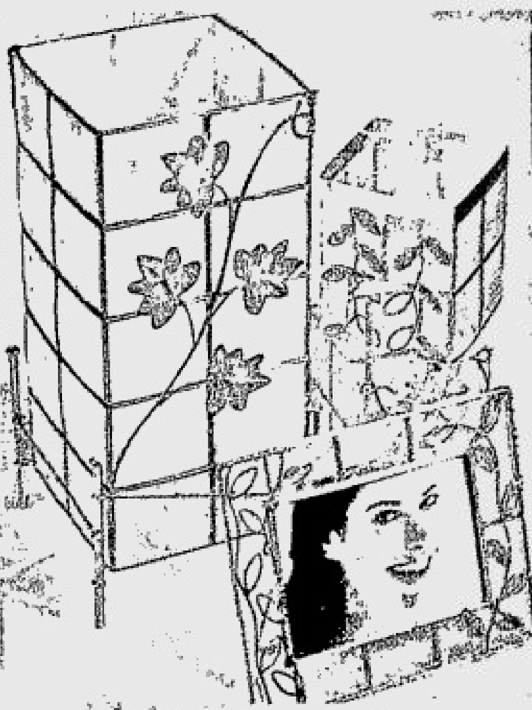

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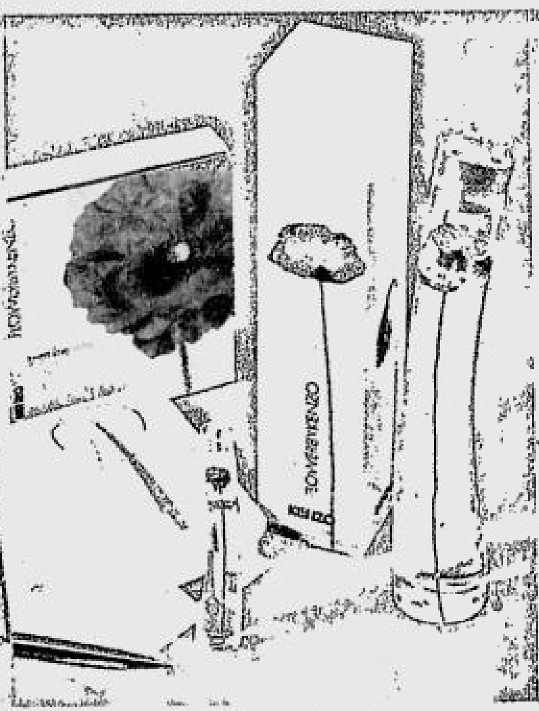

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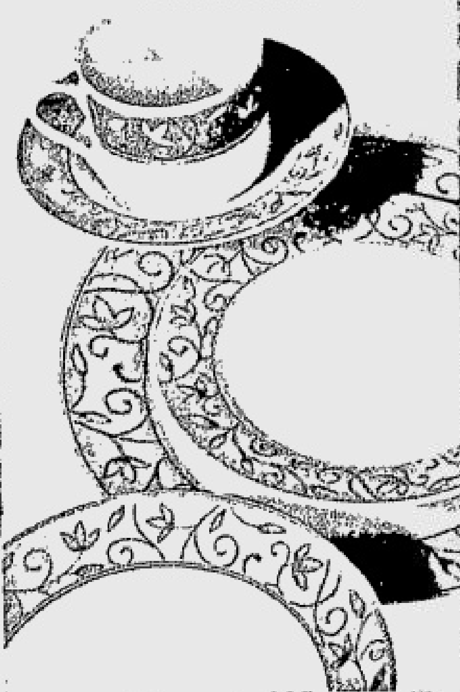

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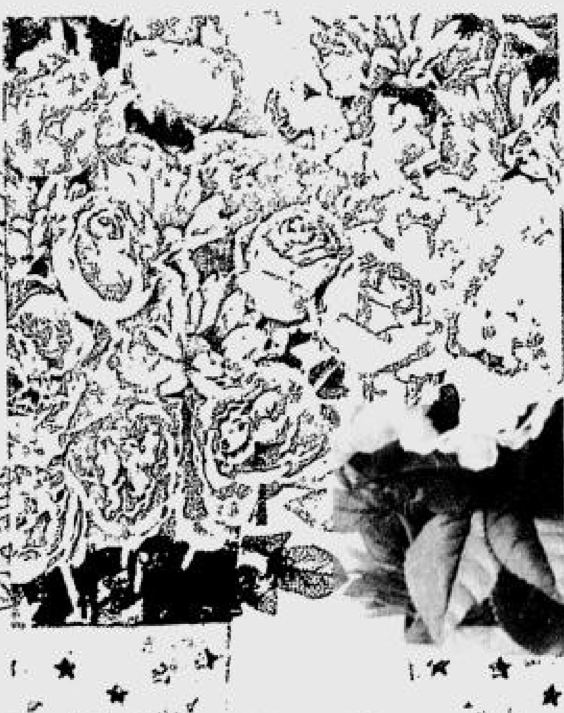

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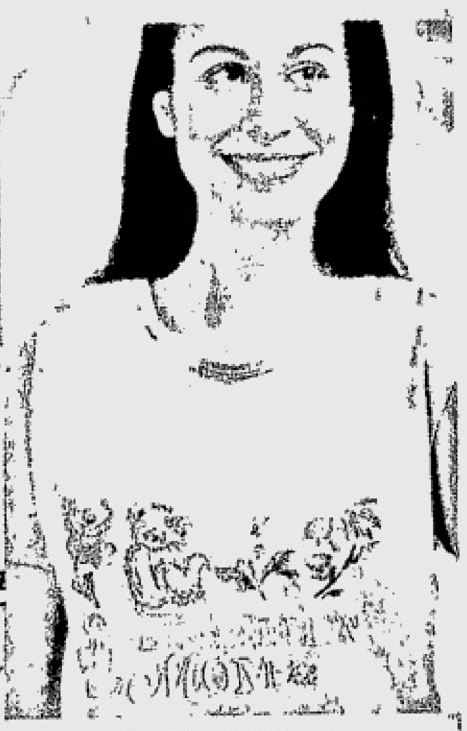

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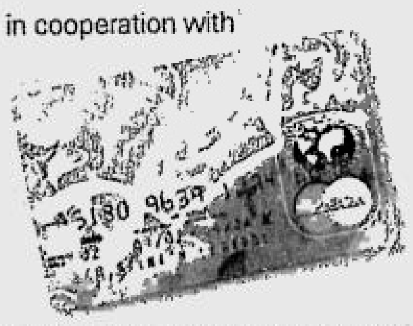

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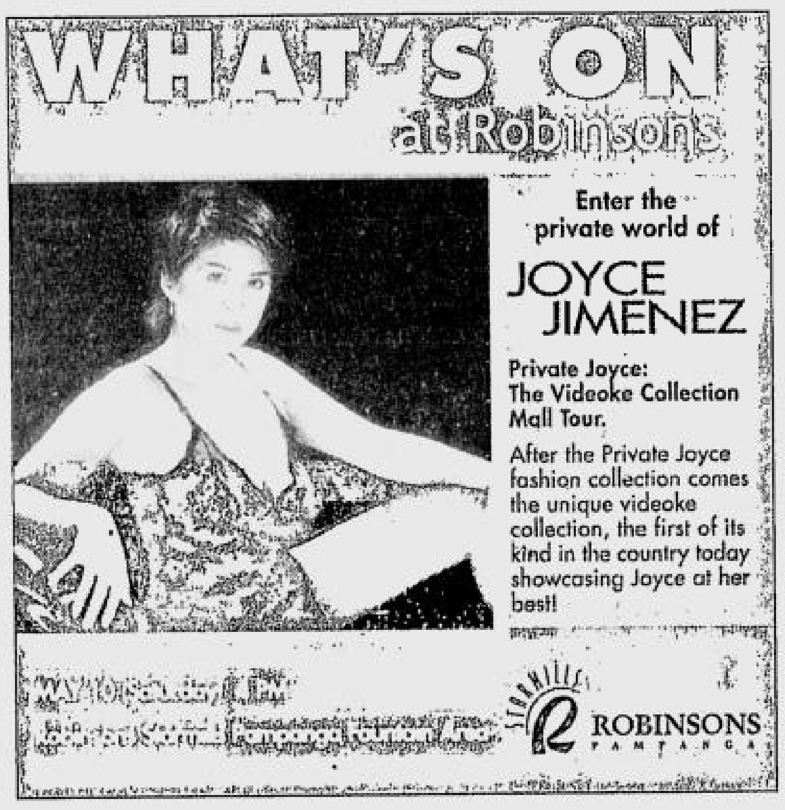
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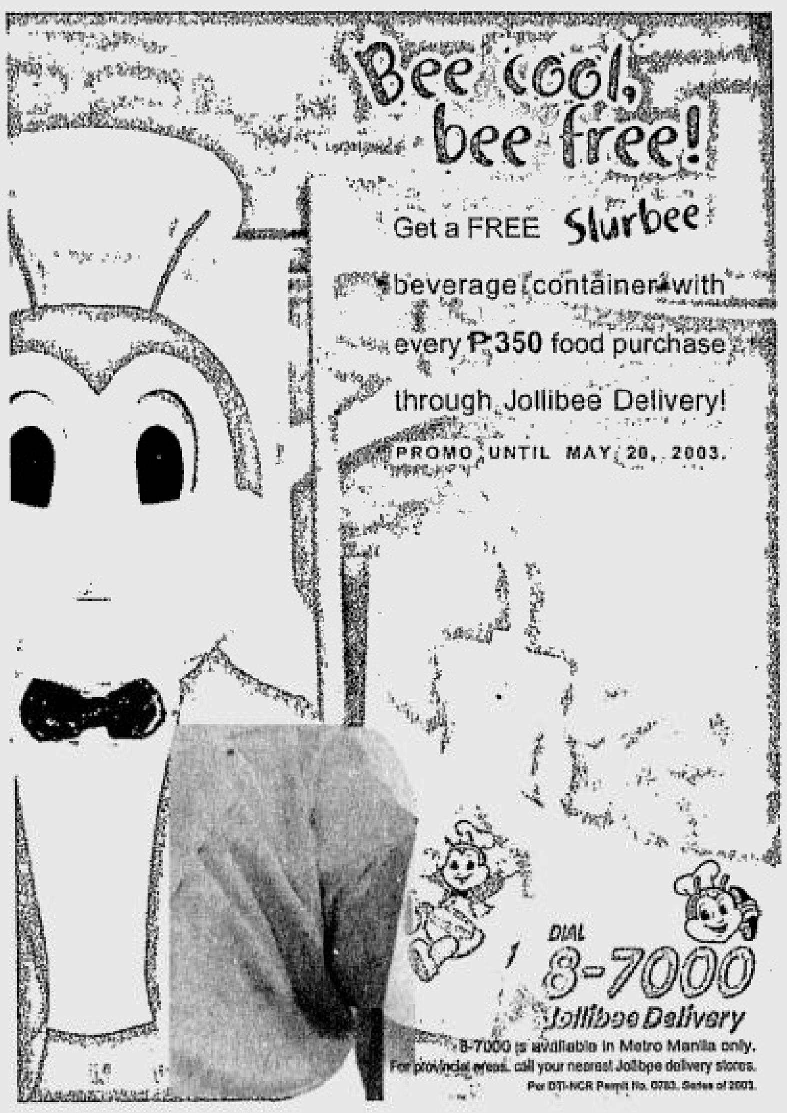
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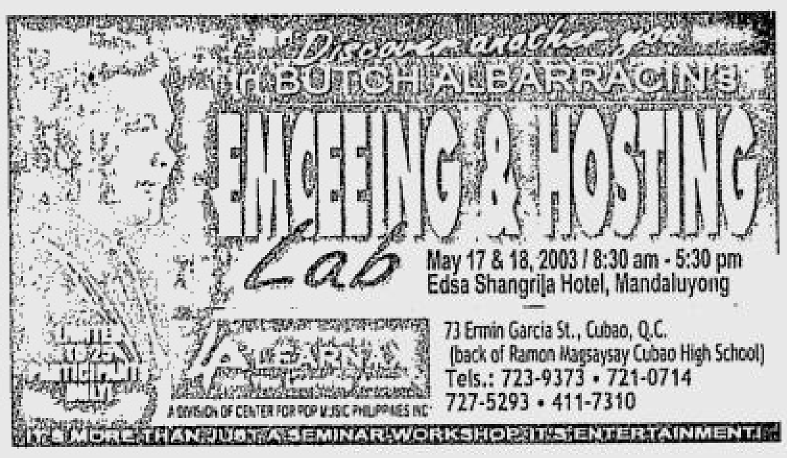
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Contributor

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When the two pooled their talents for a joint concert, showing their versatility as they shifted from solo to chamber performances, they got more critical acclaim.

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But whether the two artists play as solo performers or fuse their talents in a collaborative performance, the result is still simply stunning, musical events to reckon with.

Magic wand

After the memorable joint performance, Prof. Yatco held the baton again and steered the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO) in another concert season. His baton is a magic wand, creating disciplined symphonic sound that binds the orchestra. The sound is at once fresh, full-toned and resonating. It is precisely the Yatco touch that compels one to come and listen to a (PPO) concert, especially after the hiatus.

OSCAR Yatco and Nena del Rosario-Villanueva

Yatco is still in top form. He brought forth the soul of Tchaikovsky's "Sixth Symphony," a mighty work known for its schizophrenic moods: melancholic, convulsive, triumphant and elegiac.

Yatco sensitively etched the contrasting moods, all with stunning integrity, anchoring his rendition on a keen, not intuitive, understanding of the piece's zeitgeist. The musicians played well and were very much inspired, leaving one in disbelief and wondering if it was really the PPO performing!

Villanueva's solo recital at the Little Theater was another event worth remembering. Playing a solid program of Beethoven, Schumann, Ravel, Liszt and Chopin, she electrified the listeners who came in droves. She is also still in top form.

The program was formidable, considering that she played in succession two mighty works, a late Beethoven sonata, the "Sonata in E Major Op. 109" (one of the last three) and Schumann's "Carnaval, Op. 9" that called for heavy listening.

The Beethoven was utterly sublime. One savored a deep sense of spirituality in a totally different tonal color rather than an urgent sense of virtuosity that characterized earlier works. Villanueva eloquently portrayed this poignant thought.

Ardent sensitivity

The high point of her playing was the last movement that she did with ardent sensitivity. She opted to etch the simple, song-like theme in lush, articulated tones to keep the singing legato line.

While the audience was still relishing the beauty of the final notes of the theme, Villanueva launched into Schumann's work, which she did exceptionally well. She did all 20 sections with aplomb, but showed particular technical prowess in "Papillons," "Reconnaissance," "Pantalon et Columbine" and "Paganini."

Villanueva succeeded in giving a more apparent portrayal of the varied moods of the work than the visuals.

All the other works—"Impromptu" by Chopin, a number from the "Transcendental Etude" by Liszt, and "Ondine" (from "Gaspard de la Nuit") by Ravel—were fait accompli.

Villanueva has demonstrated once more that pianism expressed in well chiseled, muscled tones, relaxed and singing, that makes for delightful listening. Tones with depth and character, together with a high sense of musicality that ensure a blissful listening treat.

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LIFESTYLE

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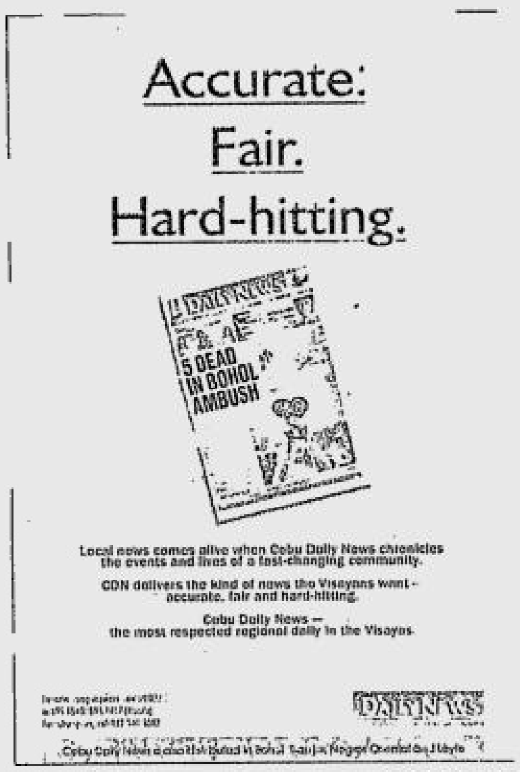
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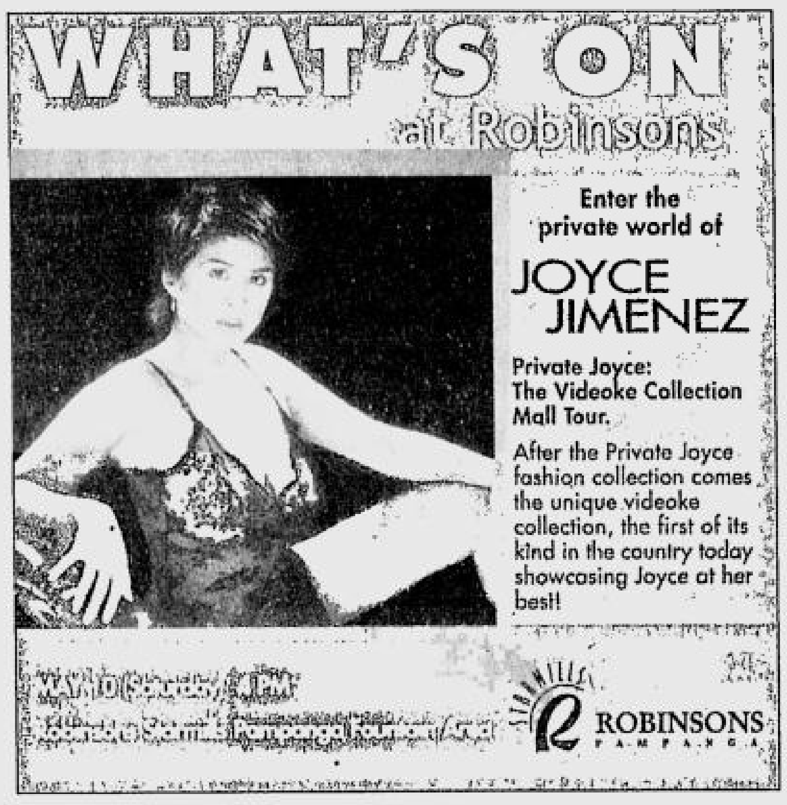
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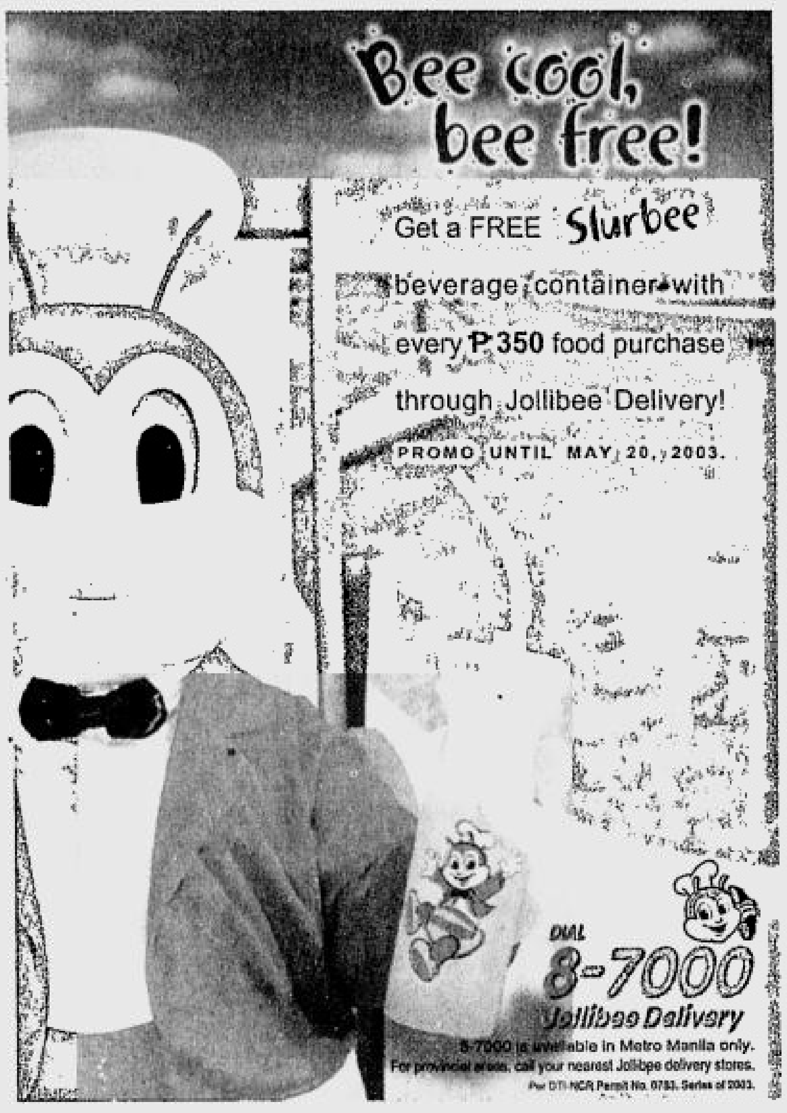
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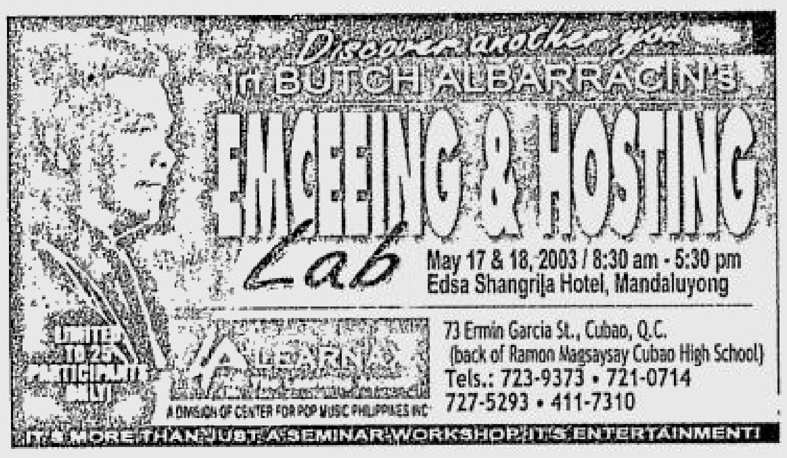
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It is only lately that local audiences are exposed to the other talent of Maestro Yatco—violin playing—as he is known more as a conductor, who led local symphony orchestras to glory. As a violinist, he is sensitive and sensible.

Villanueva, on the other hand, is known more as a concert pianist than a chamber musician. She can very well excel as a chamber performer, but chamber music is not as well cultivated as solo performance is.

But whether the two artists play as solo performers or fuse their talents in a collaborative performance, the result is still simply stunning, musical events to reckon with.

Magic wand

After the memorable joint performance, Prof. Yatco held the baton again and steered the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO) in another concert season. His baton is a magic wand, creating disciplined symphonic sound that binds the orchestra. The sound is at once fresh, full-toned and resonating. It is precisely the Yatco touch that compels one to come and listen to a (PPO) concert, especially after the hiatus.

OSCAR Yatco and Nena del Rosario-Villanueva

Yatco is still in top form. He brought forth the soul of Tchaikovsky's "Sixth Symphony," a mighty work known for its schizophrenic moods: melancholic, convulsive, triumphant and elegiac.

Yatco sensitively etched the contrasting moods, all with stunning integrity, anchoring his rendition on a keen, not intuitive, understanding of the piece's zeitgeist. The musicians played well and were very much inspired, leaving one in disbelief and wondering if it was really the PPO performing!

Villanueva's solo recital at the Little Theater was another event worth remembering. Playing a solid program of Beethoven, Schumann, Ravel, Liszt and Chopin, she electrified the listeners who came in droves. She is also still in top form.

The program was formidable, considering that she played in succession two mighty works, a late Beethoven sonata, the "Sonata in E Major Op. 109" (one of the last three) and Schumann's "Carnaval, Op. 9" that called for heavy listening.

The Beethoven was utterly sublime. One savored a deep sense of spirituality in a totally different tonal color rather than an urgent sense of virtuosity that characterized earlier works. Villanueva eloquently portrayed this poignan thought.

Ardent sensitivity

The high point of her playing was th last movement that she did with arden sensitivity. She opted to etch the simple song-like theme in lush, articulate tones to keep the singing legato line.

While the audience was still relishin the beauty of the final notes of th theme, Villanueva launched into Schumann's work, which she did exceptionally well. She did all 20 sections wit aplomb, but showed particular technica prowess in "Papillons," "Reconnaissance," "Pantalon et Columbine" an "Paganini."

Villanueva succeeded in giving a mor apparent portrayal of the varied mood of the work than the visuals.

All the other works—"Impromptu" b Chopin, a number from the "Transcendental Etude" by Liszt, and "Ondine (from "Gaspard de la Nuit") by Ravel—were fait accompli.

Villanueva has demonstrated onc more that pianism expressed in well chiseled, muscled tones, relaxed an singing, that makes for delightful listening. Tones with depth and character, together with a high sense of musicalit that ensure a blissful listening treat.

Magical 'Darna' soars back to Filipino hearts and stings

By Cora Llamas
Contributor

THE PINOY folk heroine Darna and Superman, the American Man of Steel, are both nearing the 50-year mark. They are also both involved in the classic fight of good vs evil.

But they have obvious differences not just in terms of gender.

Superman draws his strengths and powers, that set him apart from mortals, from the yellow sun, putting him in the science-fiction genre.

On the other hand, Mars Ravelo's creation is more rooted in the mythical and supernatural. Darna has swallowed a magic stone—the legendary *bato*—that transformed a shy teenage girl into a powerhouse of beauty, strength and speed.

MEDUSA-LIKE Valentina

And while Clark Kent, Superman's alter ego, left boring Smallville for Metropolis, Darna, through her homey counterpart Narda, never abandons her rural roots. She remains a *probinsyana*.

Nor is Darna Wonder Woman, although their costumes may be a bit similar. The American superheroine is a princess of an Amazon culture that thrives on competition and war. Darna/Narda's values are softer and gentler.

Age-old values

And that may just be the significant difference. So says Chris Millado, director of Ballet Philippines' restaging of "Darna!" at the Cultural Center of the Philippines this August.

"Set amid the naivete of rural life, Darna represents the super-*probinsyana*. What she fights for are our age-old values of family, *magandang loob* and humility.

"Her flying is not the flying of Superman, but that of the *babaylans* (pre-Hispanic priestesses who communed with the spirit world and protected the people from evil," he said. "Where is [Darna's] power coming from? From the *babaylans*—the healers who have strength and cunning. Their rituals are situated in agricultural centers. They pass their knowledge from one generation to another."

Even the *bato* is not a comic book *deus ex machina* that villains can pervert to their own ends. Darna's power source is anything but neutral.

Millado explains, "The *bato* will work only as an extension of what is inside the person. If he is good, he becomes super good. If he is bad, he becomes super bad."

Awful

Or, as the preview showed, simply "awful." Swallowing the magic stone, the hapless Medusa-like Valentina degenerates from sultry snake-like sexpot to an ill-looking thick-skinned transgender.

This underscores the fact that Darna is an original true-blue Filipino comic-book heroine. Millado, who wrote the book and lyrics, points out, "Why is it that when we need to see or have something or someone fly, it is always Peter Pan? Why not a Filipino character?"

"Darna" choreographer and Ballet Philippines artistic director Denisa Reyes has always pushed for Filipino icons in her material. "Darna," now a sophisticated blend of ballet, culture and multimedia, was originally conceptualized for children. "It's always been my dream to have a Pinoy ballet for kids like 'The Nutcracker' in the US," she says.

Reyes says she is still "looking for a dance vocabulary. Young dancers today have the tendency to just imitate the new movements [coming from the West]. So we are taking a sampling of folk, modern, classical ballet and noon-time comedy to come up with new vocabulary for dance!"

Noon-time comedy dancing, with the loud music, skimpy costumes and convoluted hip movements, doesn't seem to fit the classical world of ballet. But Reyes says it may be necessary to watch it to "get the template of the people... Why do people like the nonstop movement from beginning to end? It's because Filipinos like to fill up space."

Reyes likens the process to "the *ukay-ukay* look—a glossy mix and match of pop, classical and even the so-called *bakya* culture." The idea is not to adopt what "is derogatory, but to be creative, lean more toward domesticating what is foreign."

Darna's aerial battles with Valentina and her boy toys were conceptualized and executed with the support of Australian aerial movement consultant Gavin Robins. The resident movement director and choreographer of The Bell Shakespeare Company also worked for the television series "Farscape," the Australian Film Institute Awards, and the "Tin Symphony" for the opening ceremony of the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney.

Millado promises that the battle between the superwomen will have kids and adults on the edge of their seats. "[Audiences] these days are becoming more sophisticated because of video, comics, animé and the stuff they see on the Internet. They need a higher level of sophistication," he says.

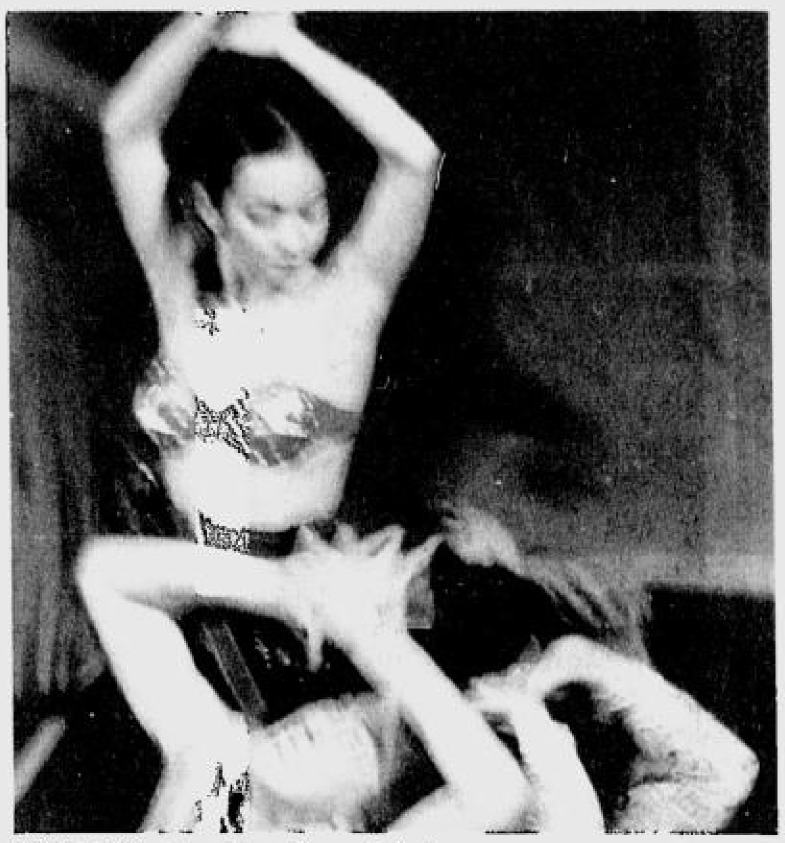
But the combat will draw more from Asian culture than the "Matrix." Unlike "Peter-Pan"-like ballet, which neatly hides strings to suspend disbelief and create the illusion of flight, the production will use more down-to-earth, labor-intensive, mountain-climbing harnessing.

Millado explains, "We will show how the magic is created. This is going back to our Asian roots. [Unlike the West], Asian theater has no separation between the performer and what surrounds him. In our *komedya* and *moro-moro*, the children see their next door neighbor playing the apostles."

The creative team wants Darna—the ballet and the comic book hero—to remain true to its Pinoy origins.

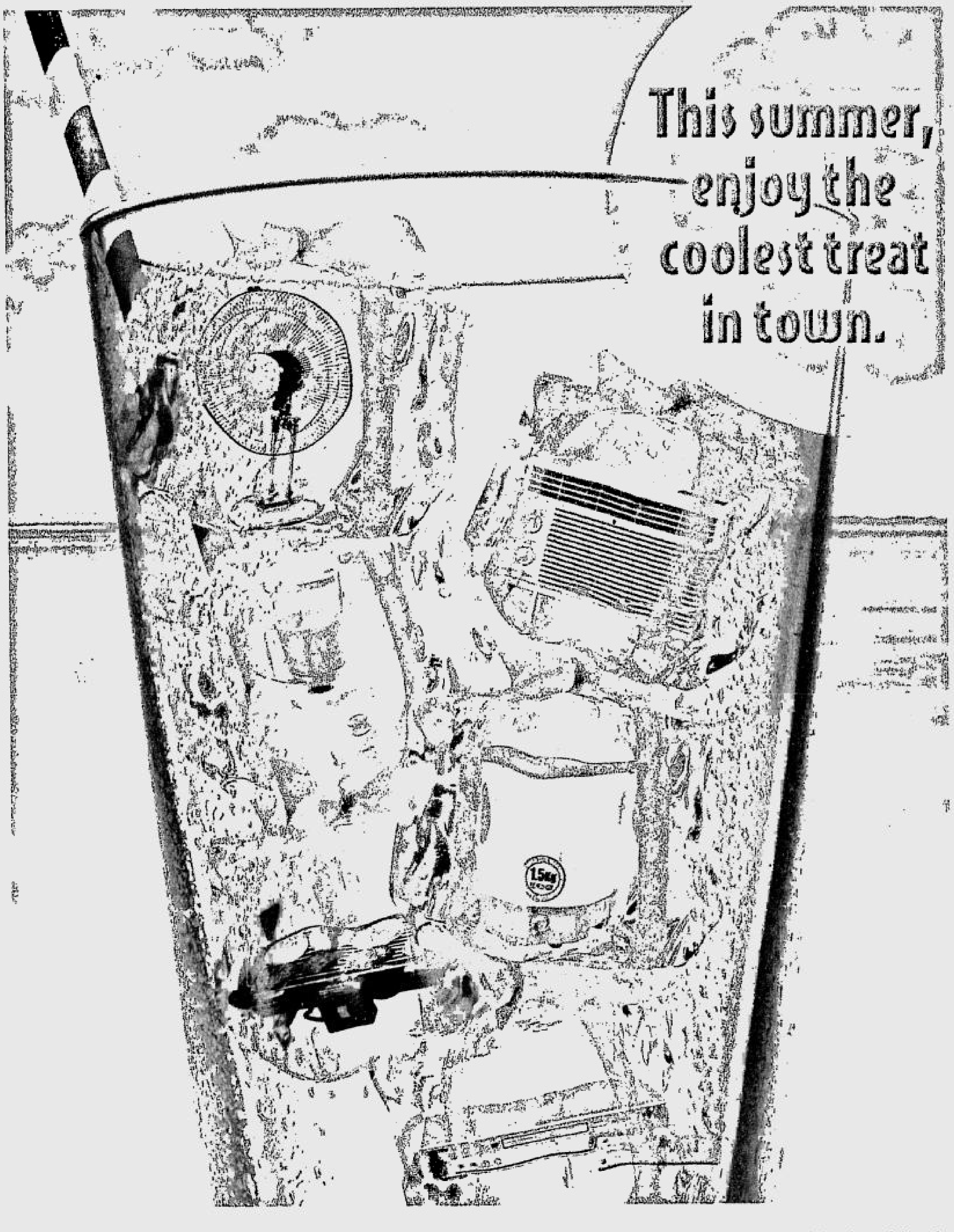
"Darna's power comes from *loob* (inner self), not from the stone," Millado emphasizes. "Later on, we will show that she does not even need the stone to fly!"

Call Ballet Philippines at 551-0221.


"DARNA" is a true-blue Pinoy original.

DING ang BATO...
DARNA'S sidekick

PHOTOS BY ROGER MARGALLO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BUHAY AWIT
SONGS OF
Bing Pimentel

Bing Pimentel's life of songs

She is a tireless composer of songs charged with romance, faith and hope

By Leah Salterio

SHE WOULD have made a fortune from her compositions had she decided to release them as commercial recordings. But Lourdes dela Llana Pimentel, fondly called "Bing" by her family and close friends, wrote them merely for personal fulfillment.

The wife of Sen. Nene Pimentel discovered her flair for songwriting when she was in her teens. She wrote her first composition, "Impossible To Love You," when she was only 16.

"The song was never arranged or recorded, but it's on my mind up to now and I can still sing it," Bing says.

Her second composition, "Hinahanap-hanap Kita," was written when she was 22 and teaching high school students in her hometown in San Isidro, Malaybalay, Bukidnon.

"Nene was already my boyfriend at that time," she says.

Gifted with musical talent since childhood, Bing never pursued her interest professionally. She didn't want to take the limelight away from her husband's political career. She also did not want to be distracted from her primary occupation, taking care of the senator and their children.

But Bing wrote songs about her many experiences in life, from her relations with her father to her love for her husband and children, to her many inspirations and trials.

Last year, when Senator Pimentel figured in a car accident in Nueva Ecija, she penned the song, "Loving You," for him.

"I was in Cagayan de Oro when I learned about what happened to him," Bing says. "I realized that in a split second, you can lose the one you love and you'll never know when it will happen. So when you love, love every second. Show him that you really love him."

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LOURDES 'BING' PIMENTEL
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Even in a traffic jam or over lunch, she can compose a song.

During her husband's detention at Camp Crame, Bicutan and in a Cebu City military cell during the Marcos era, Bing wrote songs for Nene: "I Am There, I Am There," "Only A Moment" and "Pag-ibig sa Bayan."

When Ninoy Aquino was assassinated in 1983, Bing composed "Ninoy, Ninoy Pa Rin," a song that urges the nation to rise and stand for the things Ninoy had died for.

Very romantic

The senator's wife considers herself very romantic. She wrote love songs not just for her and Nene, but also for their friends.

When Nene was mayor of Cagayan de Oro, he and Bing attended a reunion of Cagayanons abroad. A widow who joined the trip met a widower in Los Angeles and they fell in love and he promised to marry her. However, when the widow returned to the Philippines, she later learned that the man had married someone else.

Bing asked why fate should tease the widow, make her fall in love again only to be jilted. The widow's story inspired her to write "Binibiro ng Panahon."

When she turned 50, Bing wrote "Whisper To Me Once More," which she calls her "menopausal song."

"I was feeling very sensitive and crying as I wrote that song, which expresses a woman's desire to be reassured that she will always be loved," she says.

When she and Nene attended a marriage encounter, they had to write each other a letter on their reason for living. Bing didn't just give Nene a letter, but also a song, "Why I Must Go On Living." She later had it arranged.

"It says life is wonderful when one is living with the person she loves, but it is also a plea for the other to share not just the joys but also the pain and disappointments of life because they are one," Bing says.

Theirs is one of the most enduring marriages, blessed with five children—Gwen, Maripet, Koko, Jac, Terelou and Inde—and three grandchildren. On April 30, they will mark their 43rd wedding anniversary.

On March 24, 1994, Nene wrote a letter to Bing, which was reprinted in the souvenir program of "Buhay Isang Awit," the couple's 40th wedding anniversary celebration on April 30, 2000 at Club Filipino in Greenhills, San Juan.

Words and world

Part of the letter read, "And so today as we watch the sunset of our lives cast its deepening shadows, let me say the words that have kept our world together through thick and thin, 'I love you.'

"It's been 34 years that we have been married, but it seems only yesterday that we exchanged 'I dos.'

"I have no regrets whatsoever and thank the Lord that in His goodness, He gave you to me and our children—the best gift I could ever dream of in my mortal life."

Bing also wrote religious tunes like "Walang Masama sa Nakikita Ko," "Kay Hirap Maging Kristiyano," "Dahil Kay Kristo" and "Bagamat Ako'y Walang Karapatan."

Then, she had songs of other concerns like "Tsismis Tama Na," "Say No To Drugs," "Itay," "Kabataan," "Batang Lansangan," "Pamilya Pamilya" and "Pagkakataon."

Bing's music was recently showcased in the inspirational concert, "Awit.. Pagibig. Alay, Papuri," last December at the AFP Theater in Camp Aguinaldo.

Featured performers were the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, Dulce, Chinggoy Alonso, Isay Alvarez, Pinky Marquez, Freddie Aguilar, Gamaliel Viray, Bimbo Cerrudo and the UP Vocal Ensemble.

"It was a dream come true for me to hear my music played masterfully by a full orchestra and performed by talented artists," Bing says.

Bing's music has also been recorded in two CD albums. They're not commercially sold (but orders can be made by calling Ruby at 851-3120).

Bing has also produced four plays, all directed by Nestor U. Torre.

The first play bears the title as her CD album, "Buhay, Isang Awit."

The second, "The Philippine-Nigerian Show," was a collaborative effort with then Nigerian Ambassador to the Philippines Gimeta, herself a gifted composer.

"Huwag Pumayag sa Dagdag-Bawas" was a political-satire supporting Nene's battle against election fraud.

The fourth was "Nasaan si Hesus?," a road show which the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines promoted in parishes around the country.

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The soul of Enrico Labayen

Text by Allison Lopez
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

HIS words speak of great wisdom, his dance, of deep experience. Enrico Labayen, top Asian American choreographer and dancer at age 50, is someone you will surely remember for a long time—on or off stage.

"When you are this close to death, you see life differently," Labayen says, speaking of his life's many struggles. He has just come home from the US after 10 years.

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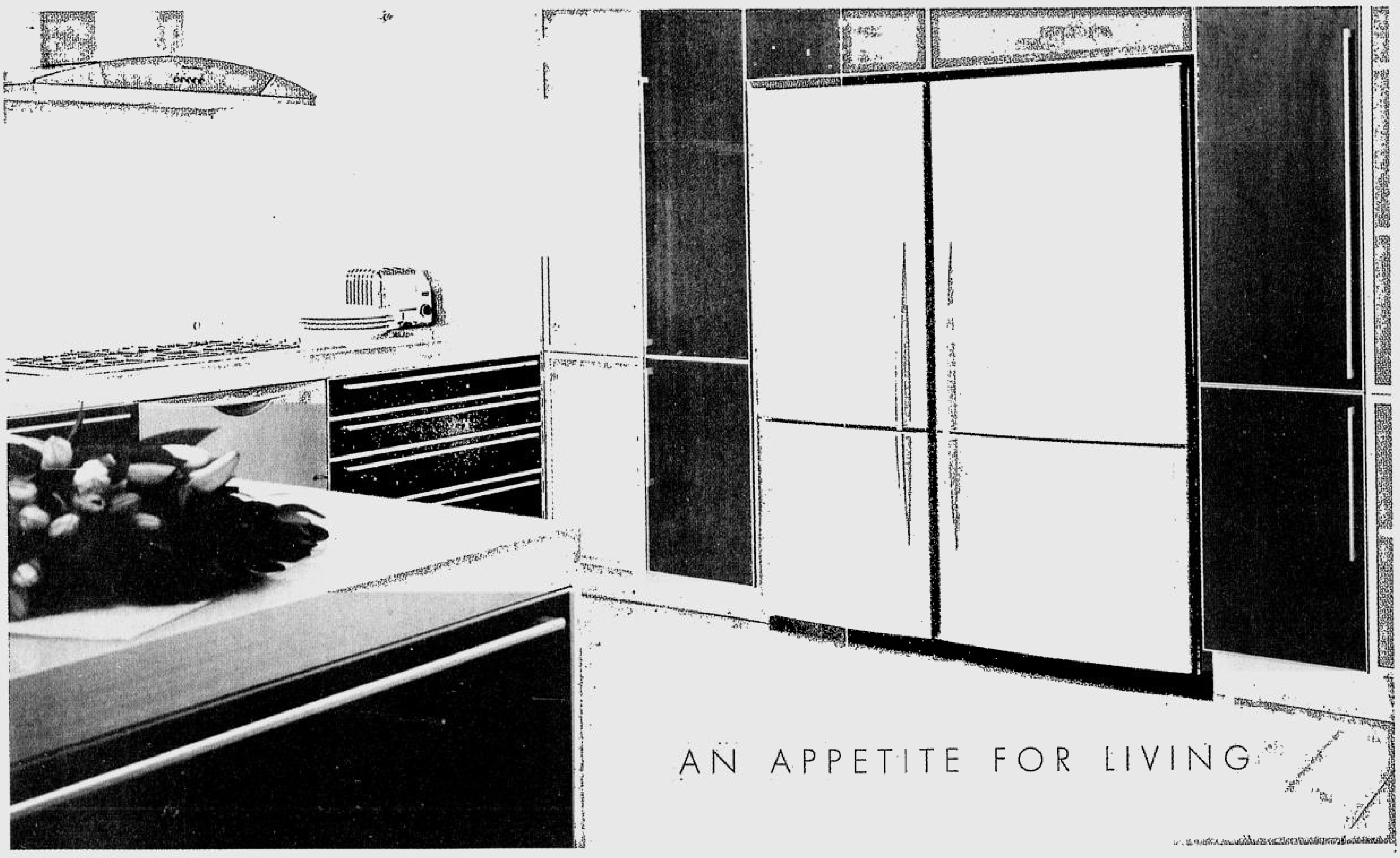

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The world of letters, love and scandal

"K: The Art of Love"
By Hong Ying
Marion Boyars, 2002

By James P. Ong
Contributor

IT IS 1935 and Julian Bell, 28, has set off to China ostensibly to teach English literature at Wuhan University. But, really, he is trying to escape from the shadow of his prominent family and make a name for himself.

Bell is the darling of the Bloomsbury set, being directly related to the famous Stephen sisters Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell.

He grew up in an incredibly liberated household where naked male and female bodies were a common sight—even male bodies caught in acrobatic sexual poses acting as models for the painters.

His family was a staunch supporter of free love in a time of Victorian moral hypocrisy and so "there was no vulgar jealousy, no prudishness."

When his mother, Vanessa, was pregnant with him, his father, art critic and philosopher Clive Bell, had an affair with his Aunt Virginia. After giving birth to Julian, she took on another lover, the painter Roger Fry.

But her life-long companion was the painter Duncan Grant, a bisexual, who brought home lovers who would, in turn, regularly steal paintings from Bloomsbury when they left the morning after.

Such was the openness in their household that every time Grant would have someone over, the children would shout: "Here comes another burglar!"

Meet 'K'

Whether or not as a result of this unique upbringing, Bell grows up to become a prolific lover—at 28 he is into his 11th conquest (thus, "K," after the 11th alphabet).

She is Lin, 10 years his senior and the wife of Bell's boss. She is referred to in contemporary biographies as the "Beauty of Luojia Hill," but Lin, a woman of letters, didn't strike Bell as beautiful enough—although her asymmetrical smile intrigued him.

He can't decide whether it detracted from or enhanced her looks.

Lin, together with her husband and their friends, reveres the Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore who, in 1913, was the first Asian to win the Nobel Prize for Literature, and so they form the New Moon Society, which take its name from one of Tagore's works. (Kenzaburo Oe, a Japanese poet, won the Nobel in 1994 for the now out-of-print "The Silent Cry: A Novel;" Chinese novelist Gao Xingjian, in 2000, for "Soul Mountain.")

The New Moon Society is composed of Chinese intellectuals, most of whom were educated in the United Kingdom and so are especially fond of Bell or, rather, his eccentric family.

They fashion themselves the Chinese counterpart of the Bloomsbury Group.

Bell, an arrogant man, regards them as half-baked libertarians who could only think theories but can not involve themselves in China's struggle, at that time, amid a brewing civil war.

Erotic adventure

"K" the novel couldn't have come at a better time—now that there is a renewed interest in Virginia Woolf. First published in Taiwan, it was written by Hong Ying, who was recently in Manila to read excerpts from the book during the British Council arts festival.

It has another thing going. It is currently banned in China, and a court there has ordered Hong to issue a public apology following a lawsuit filed by a British woman who claims "K" insulted her parents, both literary figures in pre-war China. Lin, the woman claims, was based on her mother, a poetess named Ling Shuha who had an affair with Bell and died in 1990.

But more than being just a loose biography on Woolf's nephew (the book is based on a true story), it is also an erotic adventure as Bell gets entangled with Lin, a disciple of the ancient Daoist Art of Love that contends sex can help you reach immortality.

In Bloomsbury, the women were strong-willed characters who espoused free love.

In Daoism, according to a fabled esoteric scripture called "Jade Chamber Classics," which Lin's mother had taught her, the purpose of sex is women's pleasure; men are sex toys encouraged to give the women fulfillment but discouraged to achieve their own.

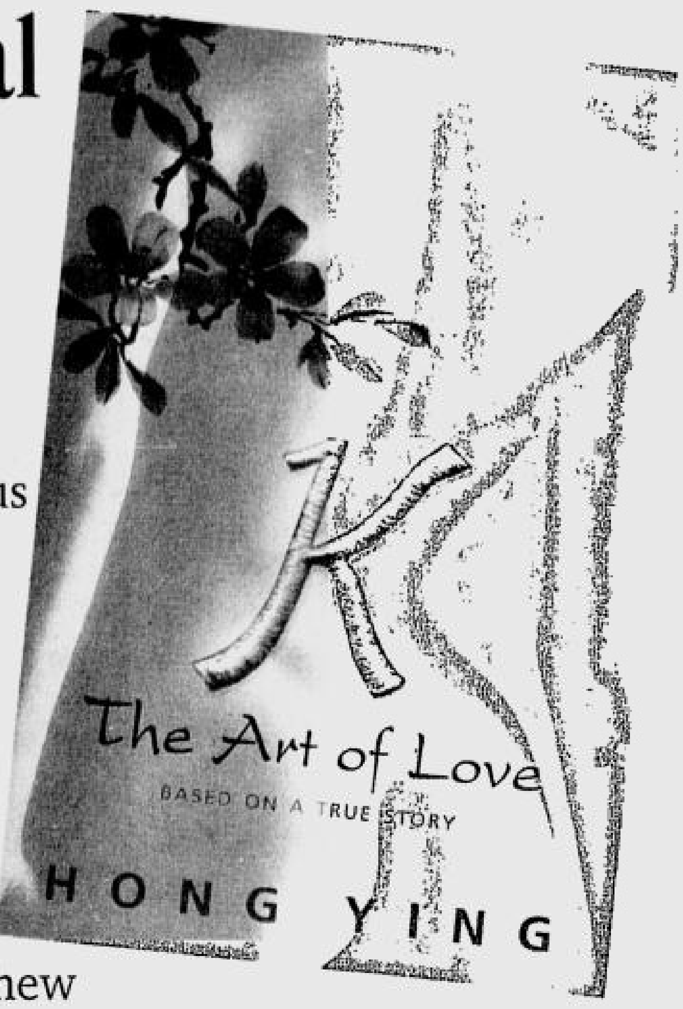
"With one intercourse and no release a man gets stronger; with two, eyes get brighter; with three, no disease is incurable... with twelve, you become immortal," explains Lin to a baffled Bell.

However, there is one inherent flaw in this Daoist Art of Love—it teaches sexual techniques and promises immortality but it doesn't prepare the two for love, especially illicit, cross-cultural love.

And so in the end, the sex is good, but the love is doomed.

Limited copies of "Art of Love" are available at the projects development unit of the British Council, 10/F, Taipan Place, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Centre, Pasig City. Call 914-1011 to 14.

The novel, banned in China, is about an adulterous affair between a Chinese poetess and Virginia Woolf's nephew



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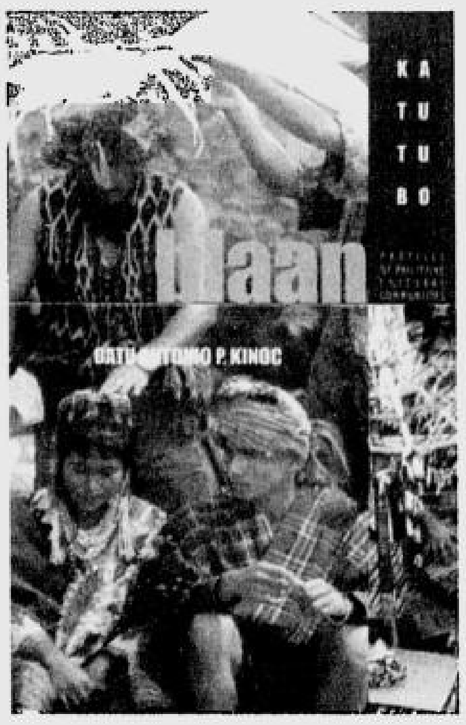
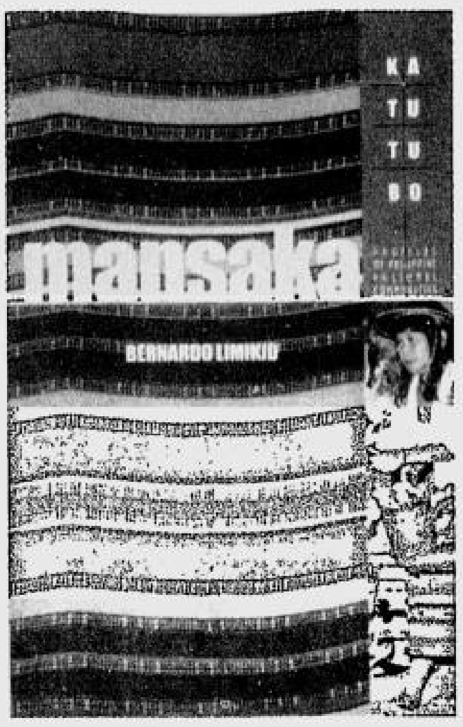




Creative writing workshop for teachers at UST

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Center for Creative Writing and Studies is now accepting manuscripts for the Faculty Creative Writing Workshop to be held on May 12-15 at the Center for Creative Writing and Studies, ground floor, St. Raymund's bldg., UST campus, España.

The workshop is open to faculty members belonging to the Dominican Network of Schools, Colleges and Universities. It will focus on poetry and fiction, in English and Filipino.

An applicant should submit a hard copy of his/her manuscript, including a virus-free encoded copy (MS Word) containing at least five poems and/or two short stories, a resumé, and 2x2 ID photo. Applicants should also submit a certification duly signed by the head of his/her department/college that the articles are authentic and have not been copied elsewhere. There are 15 fellowships available.

To conduct the workshop are Ophelia A. Dimalanta, Cirilo F. Bautista, F. Sionil Jose, Michael M. Coroza, Rebecca Añonuevo, Lourd de Veyra, Ramil Gulle and Jose Victor Torres.

Deadline for submission is May 5. Call 731-3101 loc. 8281.

New arts and culture books released

THE NATIONAL Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) has released four new publications on Philippine art and culture.

"Resistance and Revolution: Philippine Archipelago in Arms" by Bernardita Churchill is a compilation of researches done by various academics, historians and researchers on their own revolutionary traditions.

The result is a body of historical papers on local heroes and heroines and events that can be used to reconstruct a truly national history of the Filipino revolutionary struggle.

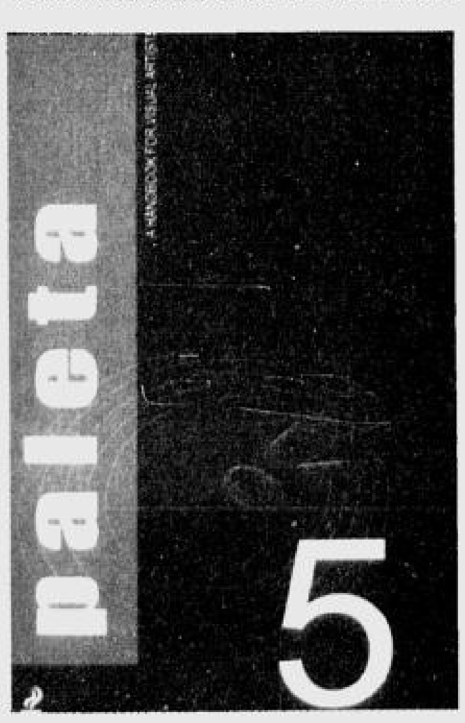
Under the NCCA's monograph series is "Katutubo: A Profile of Philippine Cultural Communities." It features the Maranao, Mansaka, Yakan and B'laan cultural communities.

"Paleta 5: A Handbook for Visual Artists" and "Thy Art: Handboook on Art Practices" are for people interested in the arts. With "Paleta 5," artists learn how to join art competitions; dos and don'ts on loaning your art pieces to institutions and corporations for exhibition; how to deal with galleries, museums and other exhibition places; and what to do when you plan to exhibit abroad.

On the other hand, "Thy Art" deals with art management, conservation, exhibition design, marketing and educational programs such as art appreciation and an artist's guide to the art scene.

Copies of the publications are available at the NCCA public affairs and information office, 6th Flr., 633 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila. Contact 527-5529 or 527-2192 loc. 613 and look for Glenn Maboloc.

RESISTANCE & REVOLUTION
Philippine Archipelago in Arms
Edited by Bernardita Reyes Churchill



New book looks into sugar power dynamics

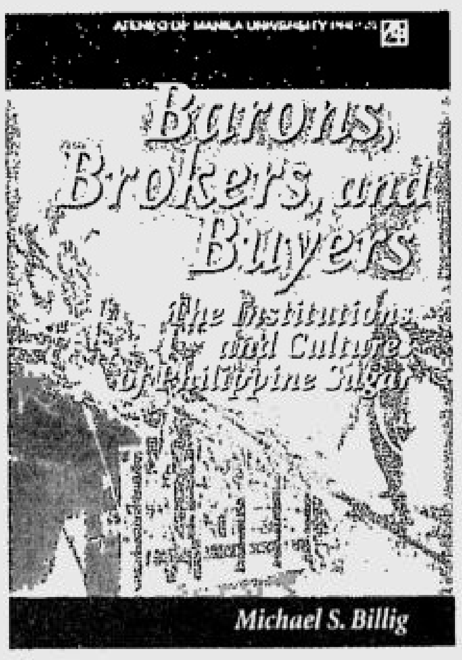
THE ATENEO de Manila University Press has released "Barons, Brokers and Buyers: The Institutions and Cultures of Philippine Sugar" by Michael S. Billig. The book is a co-publication with the University of Hawai'i Press.

The innovative ethnography takes a new approach to the study of Philippine sugar. Billig examines sugar's decline within the dynamic context of contemporary Philippine society and the international sugar market. His multisided ethnographic analysis focuses on conflicts among the various elite sectors (planters, millers, traders, commercial buyers, politicians) and concludes that the most salient political, economic, and cultural trend in the Philippines today is the decline of rural, agrarian elite power and the rise of urban industrial, commercial, and financial power.

The author's reflections on his relationships with informants in the midst of the politically charged atmosphere that surrounds the sugar industry provide a candid look at the role of the observer who, try as he might to remain impartial, finds himself swept into the vortex of political debates and power plays.

Billig is professor of anthropology at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Visit www.ateneopress.com to view the contents. For orders, call Ateneo Press (426-5984; 426-6001 local 4612 /4613) or other bookstores nationwide.


Barons, Brokers, and Buyers
The Institutions and Cultures of Philippine Sugar
Michael S. Billig

Dumaguete writing fellowships awarded

NATIONAL Artist for Literature Edith L. Tiempo has announced the awarding of 12 fellowships to the 42nd National Writers Workshop in Dumaguete City to be held from May 5-24.

The fellows for poetry in English are Mark Anthony Cayanan and Vincent Coscolluela of UP Diliman, Jonathan Davila of University of St. La Salle in Bacolod City, Ken Ishikawa of Perpetual Help College of Manila, Jasmine Nikki Paredes of St. Theresa's College in Cebu City, Rosmon Joseph Tuazon of the University of Santo Tomas, and Nicolo Vitug of Ateneo de Manila University.

The fellows for fiction in English are Louella Fortez of Ateneo de Manila, Carljoe Javier of UP Diliman, Ma. Francezca Theresa Kwe of UST, Rolanda Salvaña of University of Cebu, and Anna Felicia Sanchez of UP Diliman.

Assisting Tiempo, the workshop director, are resident panelists and facilitators Cesar Ruiz Aquino, Bobby Villasis-Flores and Ernesto Superal Yee, all prize-winning authors based in Dumaguete.

Taking weekly turns as visiting panelists are Ophelia A. Dimalanta, Marjorie Evasco, Cristina Pantoja Hidalgo, Susan S. Lara, Butch Macansantos, Danny Reyes, Anthony Tan, Macario Tiu and Krip Yuson.

Founded in 1962, the longest-running creative writing workshop in Asia holds daily sessions for three full weeks at the CAP Bldg. on Rizal Blvd., the seaside esplanade in "The City of Gentle People."

Nothing can stop Power Tours 2003

AFTER MUCH consultation and deliberations, Powerbooks Specialty Store is proceeding with the Power Tours 2003 promotion with the approval of the Department of Trade and industry.

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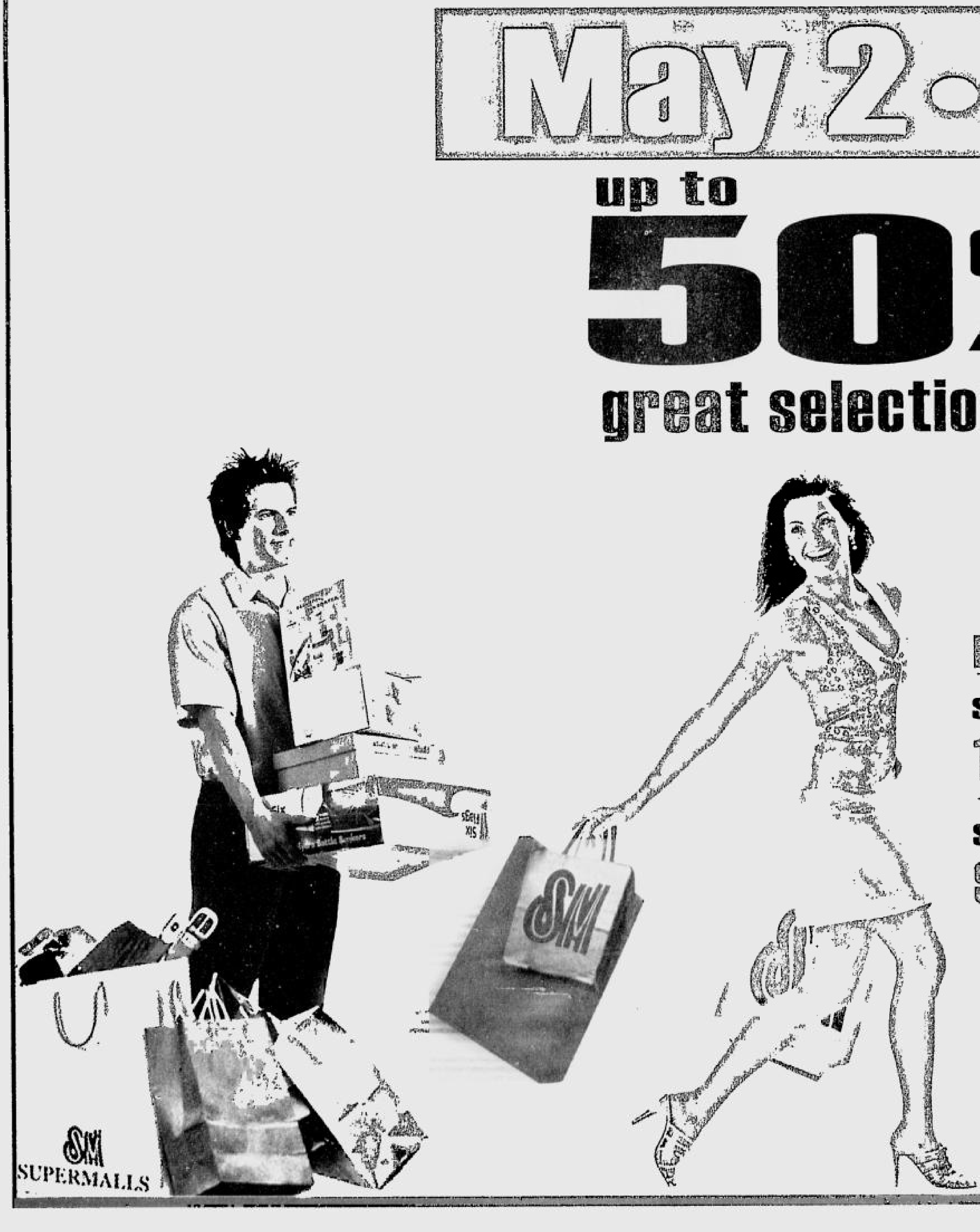

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1508 Series of 2003

The soul of Enrico Labayen

The US-based Filipino dancer-choreographer comes home for a brief visit, mellowed by age but still fired up creatively

From page H1

The homecoming is a tradition of sorts. "It takes me 10 years to bring home something I can be proud of. I'm not going to bring home anything *panis*. It has to be fresh," he explains.

With the support of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, and the MyraBeltranDanceForum, Labayen will finally give his countrymen a chance to see his award-winning choreography in "Enrico Labayen: Unbound" on May 2-4, 8 p.m. at the Danceforum in QC.

Labayen will be dancing "Cloth," his Isadora Duncan Award-winning work, "Another Butterfly," a highly acclaimed choreography, and other works. He will perform with his "main muse," Myra Beltran, artistic director and founder of MyraBeltranDanceForum; the Philippine Ballet Theater's Ronilo Jaynario; and ex-PBT prima ballerina Katherine Sanchez and PBT soloist Lea Baduria.

With a foundation in classical ballet, Labayen merges Southeast Asian movements and gestures with martial arts, American modern dance, and European contemporary Tanż-theater approaches, resulting in works that redefine and challenge traditional dance ideas and conventional musical values.

"I'm done with bravura. My dancing may be subtler now, but it requires more mind and spirit and not just pure body," Labayen says.

He may have mellowed down, but his composure only shows his extensive experience, and he is very eager to share what he has learned through his moving performances.

KATHERINE Sanchez and Ronilo Jaynario in "Duet from Arias: with kindness deep"

"I came from a dirt-poor family in Quezon City. My father used to own a tailor shop, and most of his customers were ballet dancers. I delivered the clothes to their studios, and that was where I developed this interest in dance," he says.

And he hasn't stopped since. Labayen began his dance training at the age of 13. He left the Philippines for New York when he was 16 to attend the American Ballet Theater (ABT) on a full scholarship. He briefly worked with Dance Spectrum in San Francisco, working under the auspices of Carlos Carvajal. Then, he received dance scholarships and choreographic grants from Harkness Ballet, American Dance Center, American Ballet Center, California Arts Council, San Francisco Arts Commission, The Rockefeller Foundation, and much more.

Labayen now has his own studio, Labayen Dance/SF, in San Francisco, which is also making waves across the globe for its outstanding performances.

In January 2000, Labayen was named by Filipinas Magazine as one of the "Filipino American Faces of the Century" alongside Broadway favorite Lea Salonga, Hollywood actor Lou Diamond Phillips and actress Tia Carrere, for being "one of the Filipino Americans whose lives celebrate all that the Filipino American is capable of and have truly shaped our history in the Unites States, and given the Filipino Americans and (their) community the inspiration to realize their dreams."

Meanwhile, on his country's state of dance, he comments, "People from the 1950s still teach. I don't blame them if they still want to. But it's their fault if they don't update. We have to throw those books away and really start exploring."

But why won't he stay here for good and teach dance enthusiasts a thing or two, perhaps? "If there's a donor with a great heart, who will support me in my projects… I don't believe the starving-artist thing anymore. Besides, I'm very low maintenance," he laughs.

Filipinos can only hope Labayen will stay a little longer to inspire them with his performances. To this, however, he replies, "It's really not so much the length of time. An exceptional three-minute performance may be just as experiential and create more impact than a two-hour dance."

Danceforum is located at 38 West Ave. QC. Tickets are priced at P100, with 50 percent discount for students and senior citizens (bring ID). Call 0918-4437988.

A SUBTLER Labayen in action

A SWEET embrace in "Duet from Arias"

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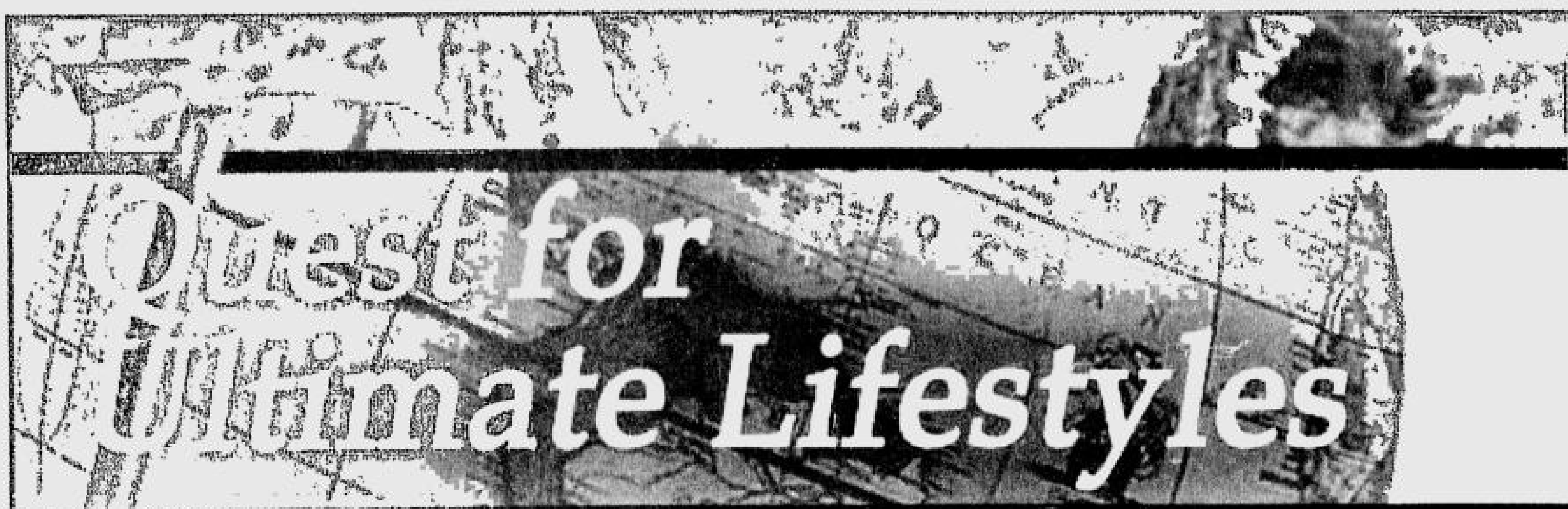

Quest for Ultimate Lifestyles

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TERRAZAS DE PUNTA FUEGO
LEISURE FARMS
FOREST LAKE
STONE CREST
PUNTA FUEGO
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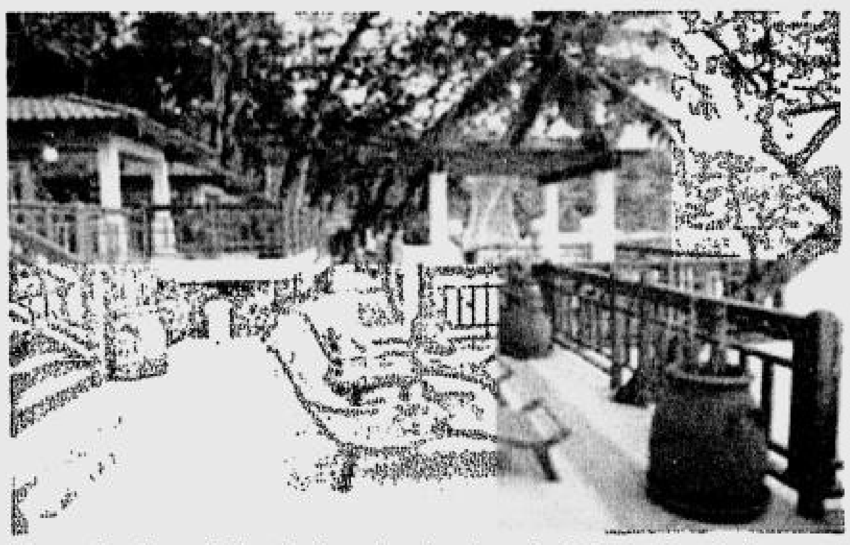


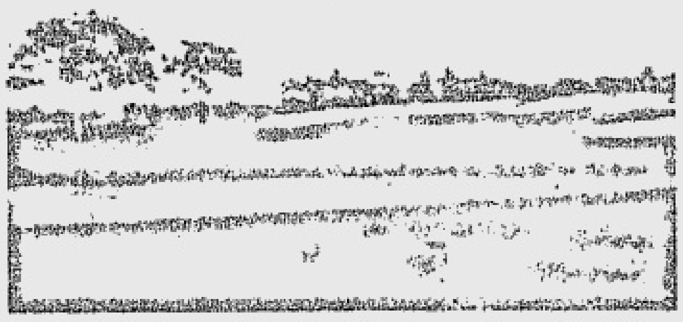
A scenic view of the best swimming beach at Nasugbu, Batangas at Terrazas de Punta Fuego boardwalk.

EVERY ENTREPRENEUR IS AN EXPLORER. HE MUST SET HIS SIGHTS ON A DISTANT TIME AND PLACE IN THE FUTURE, ENTER UNCHARTED TERRITORY AND MAKE A BID AT STAKING HIS CLAIM.

THE JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE

For explorers as diverse as Ferdinand Magellan (the first man to sail around the world) to astronaut Neil Armstrong (the first man to reach the moon) or Sir Edmund Hillary (the first to scale mighty Everest almost exactly 50 years ago), exploring (like entrepreneurship) is a magical combination of perseverance, determination and challenging traditional thinking. That image is none more true than for Landco Pacific, a maverick real estate company that has built a reputation as an intrepid explorer, and a certified success story in its own right in the field of Philippine property development.

"Adventure is a quest for the new and the different. In the case of Landco it's all about finding better products and services even if it means venturing outside the norm or even outside one's comfort zone."

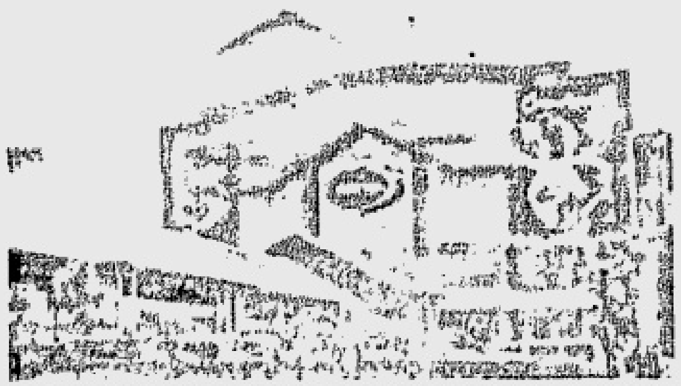


A view of Lakewood City's 155 hectare golf-residential development in Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija.

MAVERICK, FIRST MOVER

Thanks to its intrepid vision, Landco has taken the enviable lead in various sectors of an otherwise moribund property market. It was first to fly its flag on residential-resort homes through flagship project Peninsula de Punta Fuego, and in shopping centers located outside the overdeveloped Metro Manila area (through projects in the north such as Nueva Ecija as well as in the south in Lucena and Legazpi Albay). It pioneered through Leisure Farms the concept of "hobby farming" that provides not just a country estate environment but also the actual farming technology and management to make it a real and enjoyable investment. It has likewise ventured into memorial parks that deliver unmatched location and superior amenities in both the Visayas and Mindanao.

All these projects, no matter how different, have one thing in common: superior locations bundled with world-class features and facilities in innovative and irresistible investment packages. Like exploration, it's all about being at the right place at the right time and for Landco's market, the right price at the right terms.



Pacific Mall Legazpi: low prices, high quality goods as well as the fun and entertainment of a modern mall.

THE PERPETUAL MOTION MACHINE

Ceballos explains the corporate philosophy that has kept Landco Pacific ahead of the competition "If you're not moving forward, then you're just standing still. We're proud of the fact that Landco has always taken a creative approach to fulfilling our target market's needs. We're always trying to push the envelope to keep our clients happy." That attitude has created projects as diverse as the ultimate residential-resort development that is Peninsula de Punta Fuego to Leisure Farms.

For Punta Fuego, the goal was simple, to build a resort town with the excitement of Boracay but with the exclusivity of the Forbes Park, Punta Fuego proved to be so successful that a sequel was needed: the Barcelona-like Terrazas de Punta Fuego. In the case of Leisure Farms, Landco had to grapple with one question what would a Type-A executive, who has accomplished more than his usual share, want to do to relax and unwind? The obvious solution would have been, says Ceballos, "to build yet another golf course." The better solution, however, was to tap directly into the market's psyche. Alby Xeres-Burgos AVP and group head for Leisure Farms, conducted an informal survey of an idea that had been brewing in his head for years country homes with its very own mini-farms – and the response was so enthusiastic, most of the interviewees were willing to buy on the spot.

Poolside located at the Northern California inspired club-house of Woodside Garden Village, the prime residential subdivision located at Barangay Pinmaludpod, Urdaneta

"INNOVATE OR HIBERNATE"

The core principle that drives Landco, to borrow a phrase from Burgos, is just that: "Innovate or hibernate." Landco has always gone the extra mile to find the elusive x factor that will tickle the fancy of the most hard-to-please property buyer. Landco's management structure makes it accessible, almost porous, to new approaches and more importantly to newer ideas Weekly management meetings are often mind-sharing experiences for all project heads and their teams

"We don't want anybody working like an island," says Burgos. "The idea is to have a strong working team, so that everybody knows what the other is doing, at any one time." Communication lines are always open and both praise and criticism come in fair shares. "We have a well-balanced team where everybody performs," adds Burgos. "We have no Michael Jordans or Tiger Woods, nobody is a star except for our clients But there's a lot of individuality and there's always that constant evaluating and sharing."

Like any explorer carefully plotting his ascent, Team Landco applies both scientific and management principles to their plans. Benchmarks are taken, routes and techniques are painstakingly plotted. It's a combination of good old-fashioned research and development, a strong measure of hard work and a compelling vision to find the new and the different. But what gives Landco the confidence to enter a market swiftly and decisively? Burgos explains, "Because our management personnel have more than 30 to 35 years of real, hard-earned experience, from the conceptual planning all the way to turn-over. That kind of experience plus our track-record in bringing quite a number of projects to the market successfully in a short time gives us – and gives our buyers the confidence to be the leader in the market."

Enjoy the refreshing, satisfying experience of harvesting with family and friends at Leisure Farms.

Stonecrest, a Southern California inspired residential development located in suburban San Pedro Laguna, the first town South of Alabang.

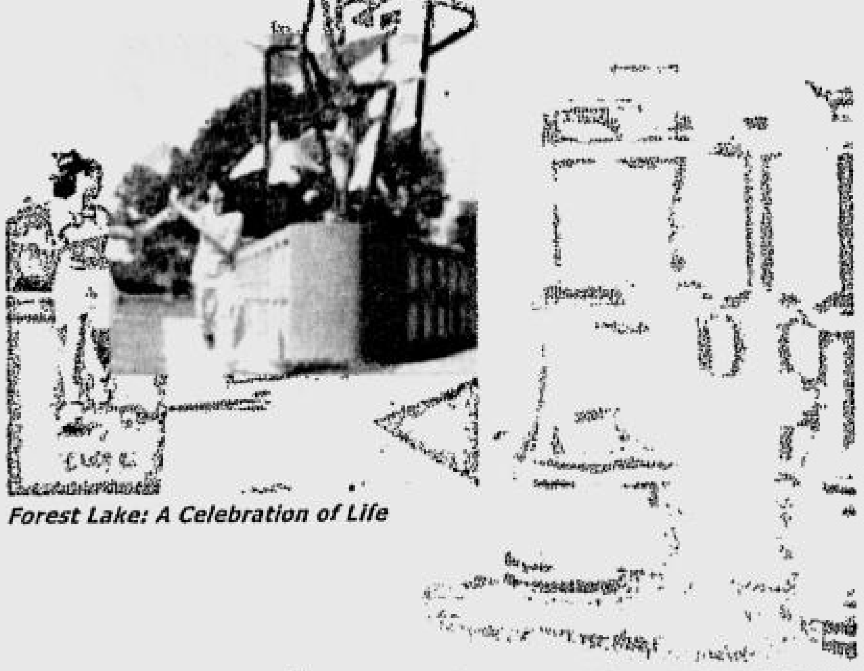
THE ROAD AHEAD

What's ahead in 2003? Landco is set to launch Pacific Mall Lucena in the third quarter of this year. Surrounded by many local convergence points (including transport routes), the mall will offer a four-theater cineplex, a food court, plus an exciting combination of Manila and local retail leaders. Burgos likewise hints that the much imitated Leisure Farms is "poised to be taken to the next level and when that is done, we will move on to develop the next project in the same line." Forest Lake, on the other hand, is set to consolidate its position in five key areas Binan, Laguna; Cebu; General Santos City; Davao, and Zamboanga

Burgos adds, "There is still plenty of unexplored territory ahead of us. And we promise, it will be an amazing journey – for Landco as well as our clients and the communities we serve."

"Even more adventures lie ahead and we invite everyone to join us."

For Landco Pacific, the quest ahead is not just for innovative property developments nor just for unparalled value for money, but also lifestyle options that bring both adventure and medicine for the soul.



Forest Lake: A Celebration of Life

LANDCO PACIFIC
CORPORATION

SNAPSHOTS OF LIFE AT LEISURE FARMS

Harvest festivals; fruit orchards; gardens; dairy farms. The light, rejuvenating taste of lemongrass tea; organic pasta; pesticide-free food. Such pure, fresh, natural delights. Amidst wide, green spaces, with no mass of concrete structures and billboards blocking the magnificent views. A clean environment; fresh air; fresh experiences. An abundance of space and time.

Those are but glimpses of what is taking shape at Leisure Farms, the Philippines' first hobby farming and agro-tourism community. Landco Pacific Corporation, developer of Leisure Farms, has put together a vibrant world of agricultural interaction, education, and enjoyment. Sprouting new crops, new technology, and exciting attractions, Leisure Farms is developing into an active and engaging agricultural community.

Alfred Xerez-Burgos, Jr. at the Hydroponics honeydew festival.

HASSLE-FREE FARMING

Bringing in the farm-fresh lifestyle, a "back to basics," weekend life designed for the gentleman farmer, Leisure Farms introduces the concept of hobby farming. With the aid of professional farm management services, from planning the farm to the daily tasks, Leisure Farms' resident farmers don't have to worry about the technical stuff; they can farm to their leisure, enjoy the sights, the beauty, the freshness.

SECOND HOME + FARMING COMMUNITY

Leisure Farms is also designed to be a second home to these hobby farmers. The second home, a concept pioneered by Landco Pacific Corporation, is usually a big family home in resort subdivisions with first class amenities, like Peninsula de Punta Fuego and Terrazas de Punta Fuego in Batangas. Leisure Farms is a new take on the concept. Combining the second home concept with the hobby farming idea, the Leisure Farms development is a novel formula that other property developers are now using as a template for their own farm projects.

"Leisure Farms introduces a new lifestyle," Alby Xerez-Burgos, AVP and Group Head of Leisure Farms, says. The fruit of a fresh idea, Leisure Farms gives residents access to a healthy lifestyle, to clean, pure, organic fruits, a great environment, and refreshing days in a clean, fresh place.

So picture your kids, and even yourself, playing outside, running around in a vast field, or harvesting fruits, climbing trees, and enjoying the farm. That's the Leisure Farms life. And this isn't supposed to be just a once-every-two-months event when the family goes off on some excursion, to get away from the city life. Farm life is living life with nature, experiencing it as part of your life, not as a temporary getaway or thrill. The idea is not to get away from life, but to experience it fully.

RESORT FEATURES

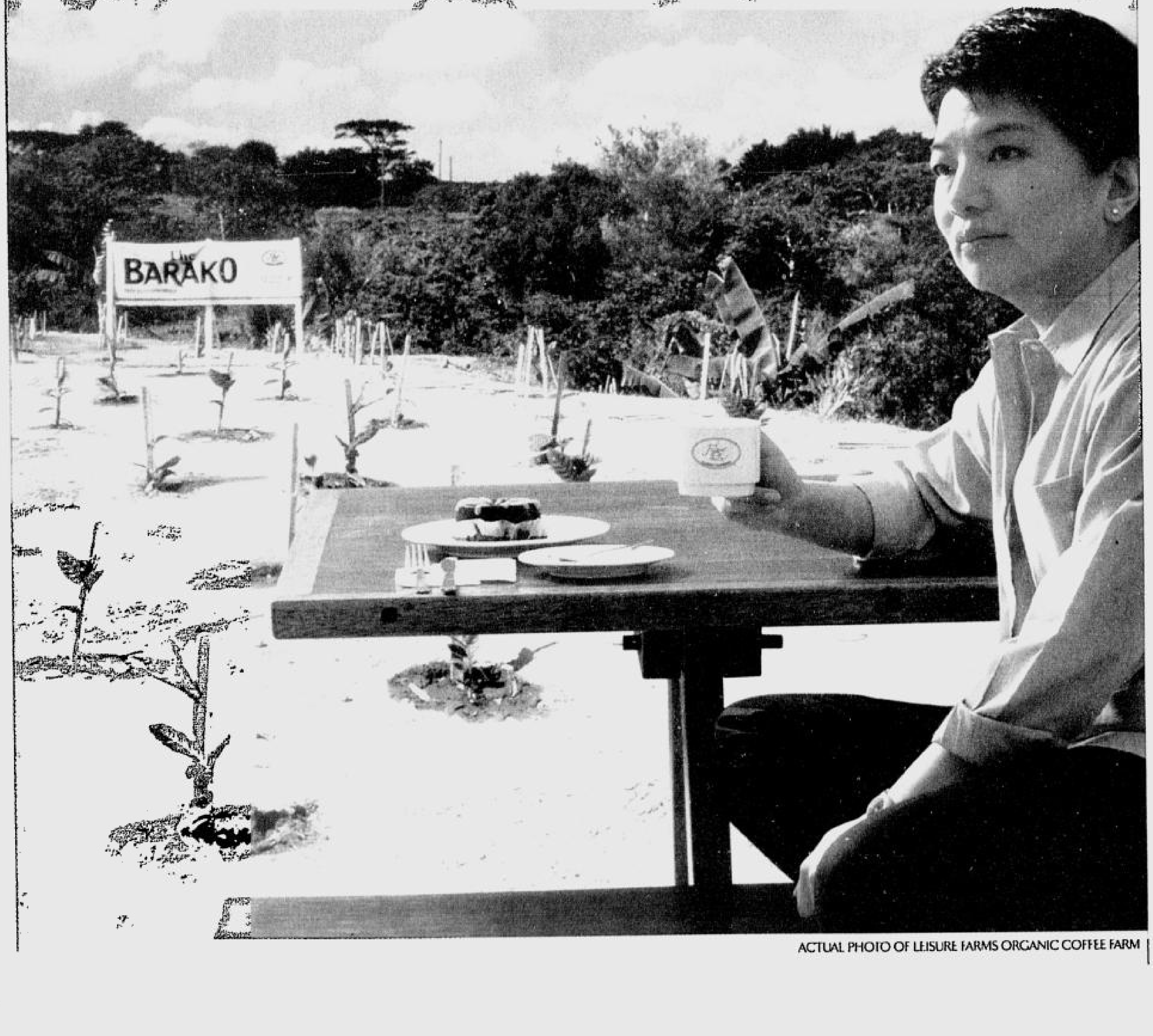
Some glimpses of what is to come: the town center, bridle path, linear lake, and the exciting agri-tainment park. Add to that picture your future house, on your farmlot - your own farm, where you'll never run out of things to discover. Where you can create an album of memories of a life well-lived and enjoyed.

Leisure Farms is a 116-hectare residential farming community. On healthy, porous, abundant soil in the breezy, rolling terrain in Metro Tagaytay, the lots are divided into 1000-1500 sqm farm lots. Farmers enjoy a splendid view of Mt. Batulao and Balayan Bay. To learn more about Leisure Farms, just call 807-8754 loc. 375 or visit www.leisurefarms.com.

From left: Albert Villa-Real, Sales & Marketing Director, Maricar Xerez-Burgos, Christina Xerez-Burgos, Alfred Xerez-Burgos, Jr., President and CEO, Alby Xerez-Burgos, AVP/Group Head.

"Anybody can put up a business...everyone wants to be an entrepreneur... but to make a difference in the industry or somebody else's life is something else."

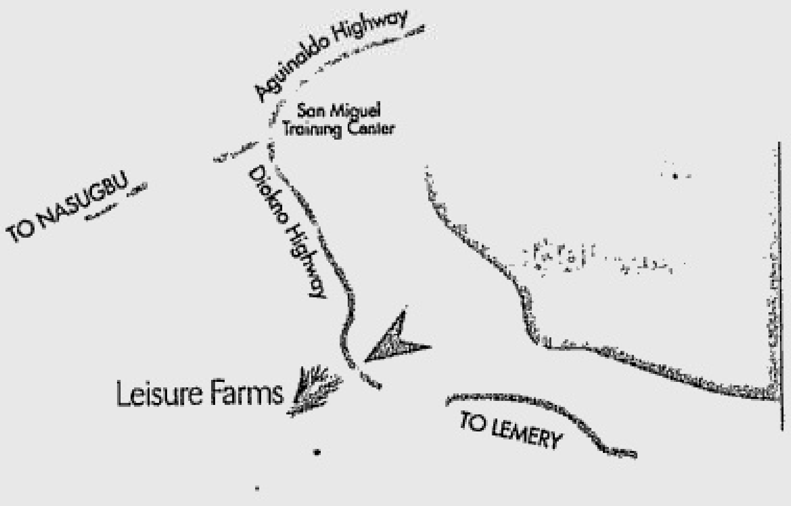
CHIT U. JUAN
CEO, Figaro Coffee Company
Partner, Save the Barako campaign



ACTUAL PHOTO OF LEISURE FARMS ORGANIC COFFEE FARM

HARVEST THE FULLNESS OF LIFE.

LEISURE FARMS
A SECOND HOME
FOR THE WEEKEND FARMER



Landowner & Developer

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Telefax 809.5628
website: www.leisurefarms.com
email: leisurefarms@landcopacific.com

HLURB License to Sell No.: 05615-R4-1202

Figaro Coffee Company planted their own organic coffee farm last year in Leisure Farms as part of a program aimed at saving the nearly extinct Barako species and boost agricultural and community development in the local coffee industry.

LANDCO PACIFIC
CORPORATION

LIFE IS A PARTY AT TERRAZAS DE PUNTA FUEGO

Alfred Xerez-Burgos, Jr. at the ribbon-cutting of the board-walk at Terrazas de Punta Fuego. Standing in front (from left) Atty. Leticia Pedrosa-Hidalgo, Alfred Xerez-Burgos, Jr., President and CEO of Landco Pacific Corporation, Brgy. Capt. Anton P. Reyes of Natipuan, Nasugbu, Batangas and Atty. Ramon Pedrosa.

> "The atmosphere was festive and the air reverberated with the pulsating beat of Latin music..."

Terrazas de Punta Fuego officially unveiled its boardwalk recently to signal the completion of the first phase of the beach facilities for their homeowners and club members.

Puro Ritmo entertains the crowd with its pulsating latin music

Terrazas de Punta Fuego is the latest exclusive residential resort development project of real-estate developers, Landco Pacific Corporation and Roxaco Land Corporation in partnership with the landowners, the Pedrosa family. Set on 42 hectares of prime seafront property, it is heavily wooded with a lush natural landscape that provides scenic views of the Batangas mountain range and the South China Sea. The Terrazas boardwalk fronts 800 meters of fine, white sand beach that lines the property, the best white sand swimming beach in all of Nasugbu. The boardwalk's main feature is its 18 cabanas, cleverly nestled on two levels of a thickly-foliaged mountainside facing the beach.

Msgr. Augusto Pedrosa leads the blessing of the boardwalk

The beach party dubbed Las Ramblas en las Terrazas brought to the shores of Nasugbu the energy and vibrancy of Las Ramblas, the famous pedestrian strip in Barcelona, Spain with music and activities reminiscent of the strip's popular offerings. Guests were seated on chairs set on the sand under a canopy of net and yards of colorful blue and yellow fabric while they listened to the rhythmic sounds of Bo Razon's Puro Ritmo band. It was a day for families and there was something to do for everybody. Children were entertained by the lively games and the clowns. Kids and adults alike sat mesmerized as they were captivated by the magician's sleight of hand. The cabanas featured activities for guests of all ages like caricature artists, jugglers, and face-painting artist. Lucky guests were treated to a soothing and relaxing massage session in the cabanas as the Balinese bamboo shutters were rolled down for privacy.

> **Terrazas de Punta Fuego is set on 42 hectares of heavily wooded, lushly landscaped prime seafront property that provides scenic views of the Batangas mountain range and the South China Sea. The boardwalk fronts 800 meters of fine, white sand beach – the best in Nasugbu – that lines the property.**

Guests show off their painted faces

The scorching summer sun invited everyone to a dip into the refreshing water of Nasugbu Bay as guests were provided with floaters and kayaks, giving them endless hours of enjoyment on the water while children, mindless of the heat, built sand castles on the shore. As the afternoon wore on, there were queues to the halo-halo stand and the native ice cream stand for the much needed heat quenchers.

The Landco and Roxaco executives were on hand to welcome existing and potential Terrazas lot owners. The team was led by Landco Pacific's President and CEO, Alfred Xerez-Burgos, Jr. together with EVP Francis V. Ceballos, VP Pat Villano, Project Director Joby Xerez-Burgos. The Pedrosa family was well represented by Atty. Ramon Pedrosa, Monsignor Augusto Pedrosa who led the invocation and blessing of the boardwalk, Carlos A. Pedrosa, Chairman and President of 1st E-Bank, Carlos Pedrosa and sister Atty. Leticia Pedrosa Hidalgo. Ladies who donned their fashionable summer hats were Doris Bautista, Mari Antonino, Amelia de Leon and Lita Hidalgo.

Clowns liven up the crowd with crazy antics and games.

Las Ramblas en las Terrazas was successful in bringing the famous strip's energy to the shores of Batangas as Terrazas de Punta Fuego unveiled a structure that will be a landmark at this popular strip on the Nasugbu coastline.

For more information on Terrazas de Punta Fuego, please contact the Customer Service Hotline at tel. no. 809-7316 and 809-2290, email: puntafuego@landcopacific.com or visit www.landcopacific.com.

Life's happiest moments happen around a body of water.

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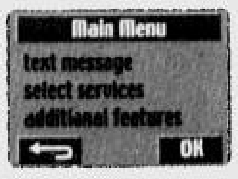
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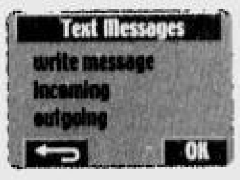
2. Go to "write message".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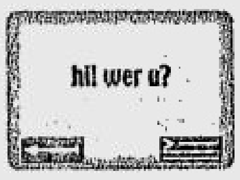
3. Key in your message and press upper right button.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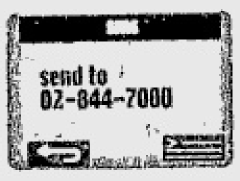
4. Enter cellphone or landline number you wish to send the message to. For landline numbers, include area code.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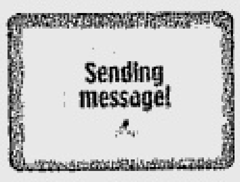
5. Then press "send".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